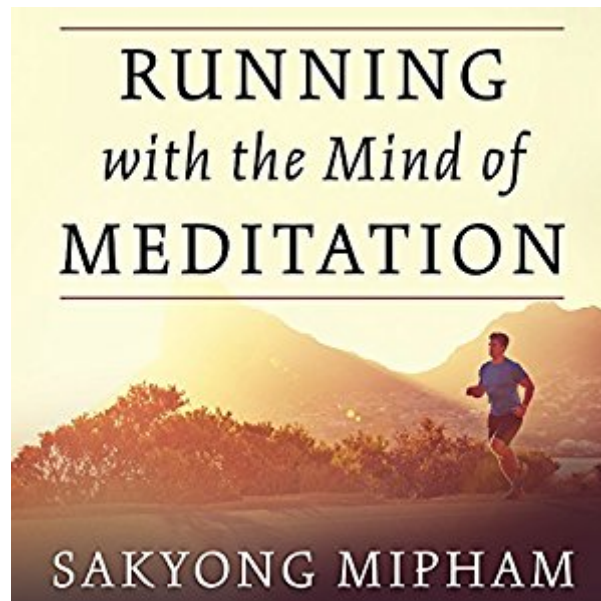


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# Running With The Mind Of Meditation: Lessons For Training Body And Mind



## Synopsis

As a Tibetan lama and leader of Shambhala (an international community of 165 meditation centers), Sakyong Mipham has found physical activity to be essential for spiritual well-being. He's been trained in horsemanship and martial arts but has a special love for running. Here, he incorporates his spiritual practice with running, presenting basic meditation instruction and fundamental principles he has developed. Even though both activities can be complicated, the lessons here are simple and designed to show how the melding of internal practice with physical movement can be used by anyone - regardless of age, spiritual background, or ability - to benefit body and mind.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've been running consistently (that is, more than three times per week and for at least twenty miles total) for over thirty years and have completed marathons, ultras, and Ironman triathlon distance races. Until I read this book, I wanted to have inspirational music plugged into my head and constantly searched for new play lists when the current one lost its magic to motivate. After reading this book, instead of seeking a mood created by music in order to have a good run, I now create my own mood or head out looking to see what I can find by being in the moment. There is enough on meditation in this book to quit looking for external stimulus in order to create internal motivation. You can create your own motivation and enjoy running (or any endurance event) without outside assistance beyond what you can perceive from your surroundings, whether in the woods or the city. This book is full of moments when I stopped reading to underline something and nod to myself. Very

good read and excellent practical advice. For an amazing read of what is possible in the realm of human endurance, check out *The Marathon Monks of Mount Hiei*.

I love Sakyong Mipham's other books and I bought this expecting to also like it for its insights into how our minds work. What I didn't expect was that within 15 minutes of picking it up, I would be lacing up my running shoes and heading out the door. I haven't run for over 6 months and thought, well maybe my running days are over. Now I know that they are--as a form of punishment. This book reopened the door to running as a joy. As I continue to read, the depth of the book continues to unfold. Yes, you can use it as a source of inspiration to take care of your body. You can read it as a primer on mindfulness and awareness. But you can also read it as a guide to creating happiness and peace within yourself. A surprisingly deep--but still quite pragmatic--book. Highly recommended.

The book isn't what I expected and hoped for. I wanted to read about how to meditate while running; how to focus my mind and keep it off thoughts of fatigue during endurance events. Instead, I would describe the book as somewhat of a compare and contrast between running and meditation. He describes how the pursuit of running can be justified and helpful for meditators. The author is very good at teaching meditation concepts and has an easy writing style. I did learn a few new insights about meditation. He describes running and gives anecdotal experiences from his own journey. The book, therefore, is good if you're already a meditator who's considering getting started in running, but isn't what I was looking for.

Having been a runner for 50 years and a meditator for 40, I was naturally interested in this book. My reaction after a first read was the same as I had with the author's other two books: nice, but simplistic. However, my experience with his first two books was that they somehow deepened upon subsequent readings. I gave this book another try, taking it with me on a week-long meditation retreat while I was recovering from a running injury. The advice in the book on healing from injury was helpful. More to my surprise, the book provided significant guidance on my meditation during retreat. As I have continued to re-read this book I have found my running has changed from being "good for me", driven, and slightly aversive, to being a relaxed and joyful experience that leaves me refreshed and relaxed. Oddly enough, my speed has increased. I subsequently used this book as meditation for hiking on a retreat I led in the Grand Canyon. Tiger instructions were very good for staying on the trail without falling, a must in the Canyon. Ascending Bright Angel trail at the end of a

week, the Lion instructions were great for touching on panoramic awareness. What I have come to realize is that the author is very good at making profound insights accessible. A casual reading of his work may leave one with the impression that it is simplistic, but my experience has been that careful and continued attention to what he writes reveals a genius for writing on many levels of understanding at once, so that many people can benefit from what he says, and that most could benefit from reading it many times.

This book was a big disappointment to me in that it did not give me what I wanted and what I expected from the description and some of the positive reviews. It does have a lot of helpful information about meditation, and it helped me see for the first time the purpose behind focusing on the breath in meditation. Hence the three stars. I would probably like the author's other books more, the ones that are strictly about meditation. But I expected a book with specific and unique tips and techniques for what to do with your mind while running, and how to enjoy yourself more while running without an MP3. Granted, there is a little bit of this--a very little. The advice on that front is nothing that you haven't already thought of - focus on your breath, focus on your form, notice nature around you, run from signpost to signpost. And a great deal of general talk about mindfulness in all of life, which includes running. If you are considering buying the book for the purpose of enjoying running more without a MP3 player, don't bother. The book does not seem to have a discernible structure, other than in part discussing various stages of meditation and running using animal metaphors, which personally left me flat and I found that aspect tedious. The author starts the book by saying that meditation and running are two separate things, and you don't meditate while you run. Then, throughout, the book jumps back and forth, randomly and pointlessly, between separately talking about meditation and talking about running, and the author's personal experiences with both.

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