

Special Feature | THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS |

On the Run

RAJIV RANJAN MISHRA, MD, CLP INDIA FEELS LIBERATED WHEN HE'S GOT HIS RUNNING SHOES ON

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Be it the sweltering sun, the heavy rains, or chilly winter mornings—no weather variations have managed to keep Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, managing director of CLP India, off the track. The orange-blue hues that form the colourful spectacle of a sunrise, the warmth of the sun rays that make way through tiny leaves, embrace you, and the tranquility that surrounds the whole process are some of the external forces that have been driving him to run every morning, for the past sixteen years.

Ironically, Mishra has always been fascinated with cricket more than any other sport. In his school days, he was well-known for his wicket-keeping. But, as Mishra says, "You get wiser as you get older", and so he did. He kept aside his obsession with cricket, and, with fitness in mind more than passion, looked for other, better options. After trying power yoga, the gym, and a couple of other sports, Mishra chose running in the year 2000, for nothing less could prove itself to be more convincing to him as a fitness regime.

What drew him to athletic running? He says, "Running brings in a tremendous amount of discipline to one's body. Although it is a physical activity, it requires a lot of mental strength. I feel healthier as my body feels lighter after a long run. I find it to be a very liberating exercise." Unlike other

runners, Mishra does not carry any gadgets such as calorie meter, an iPod, or even his mobile phone. He finds music a distraction while he's running. Mishra has been pursuing this hobby religiously, believing the time it takes to pursue it to be essential for himself.

He has also participated in more than 24 half and full-marathons. Participating in such competitive events tops the must-do list of Mishra's to-do every year. Standard Chartered marathons in Mumbai, Bangkok and Hong Kong, Pune International Marathon, and Airtel Delhi Half Marathon are some of the marathons he has run, to name a few. Mishra runs four days a week regularly, a routine that changes to six days a week in preparation for a marathon. Even with his busy schedule at work, he does not compromise on taking a day off. He chooses to run by the distance

and not time. "Covering a certain distance in a stipulated time is only a by-product of running," says Mishra who carries his gym bag with him even while travelling.

Ask him how running has impacted his life, and Mishra fires off a list with the speed of light. "Taking more risks, tackling challenges with ease, high immunity, increased endurance, good sleep, discipline, and high concentration power have been the benefits of my running," says Mishra. The running enthusiast has even encouraged some of his friends and colleagues to take up running.

Highlighting the mental strength that is required to accomplish a physical activity, Mishra says, "The power of the mind over matter plays an important role in running. If you haven't set your mind, you cannot complete your goal no matter your physical strength. It is only my mental strength that has brought me thus far." Mishra is hoping to indulge himself in other sports as well to keep himself active in parallel activities, along with running. At the moment though, he is only focused on the track ahead.

