

Nobody owes nobody nothing. You owe yourself.



In 2014 I started running on the treadmill my mom gave me years ago. Having it in my garage was a great asset. When you have to look after 2 small children, do housework, cook three times a day for 4 people, work, study and spend a bit of time on yourself too... going to the gym or even walking outdoors is not really an option.

Especially in the beginning of a [difficult weight loss journey](#) where motivation is non-existent. **I am sure many women know exactly what I mean.**

I was doing a combination of walking/running for 20 minutes once a day. At first this was, as expected, really hard. Mostly because I wasn't in the right psychological state for something that requires a lot of self-discipline, strength and incentive.

As I have written before, **all the 'great' work-out/healthy eating advice is meant for people who are already fit and have lots of time.**

In real life, most women/moms do not have the right emotional, mental and physical resources to follow such regimes. If only trainers and healthy eating gurus were able to identify with the every day person and with people who go through all sorts of problems, including mental health ones, they would be able to help more.



I have talked to so many women who end up feeling worse and confused after visiting such health websites or weight loss YouTube channels rather than motivated and inspired.

I decided to ditch all that and follow a strategy that felt more natural to me... more humane. Feeling restrained from eating specific things is kinda depressing and goes against my Mediterranean **'enjoy life while you are still alive'** view.

Balance is the key here so in moderation you can eat everything you want as long as you are sensible about it. I was never the one to live off salads and herbs all day long.



I love food, I love cooking for my family, I love sweet treats and I love my relaxing wine nights! Losing weight, working-out or making any change take place needs conscious effort and mindfulness! It will not happen on its own, not by magic, and not by someone else. It is all intentional and committed work determined 95% by YOU.



In August 2014 I would have never believed that one day I would be able to run a lot. In 2015 I was officially diagnosed with [Multiple Sclerosis](#), a cracked heel, a bad ankle and other health issues. After a compulsory running break of 4 months,

ordered by my doctor, I was back at it.

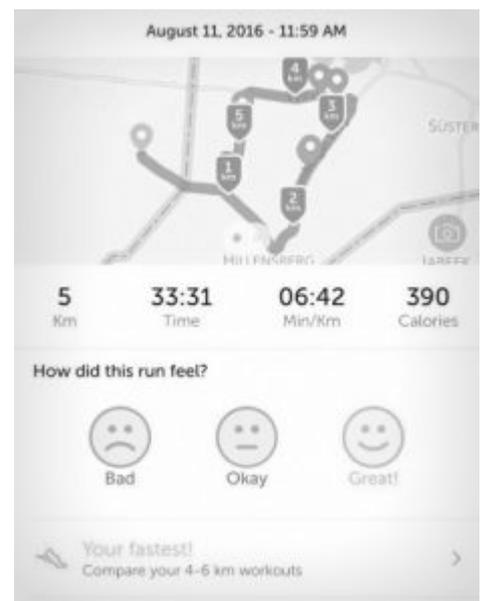
This time I started running in the fields, streets, grass and up the hills (although there are soooo few of those in Holland).

There were some bad days and then some harder ones. On those days I was inspired the most.

Very few people in the world wake up carefree and motivated – the rest of the human population lacks that. That's ok, though, because I learned that **MOTIVATION FOLLOWS ACTION...** so you do it anyway regardless of how much you really want to or not.

However, **I have decided long time ago to love myself first** and that is more important than any of the things above.

Last night I slept for 2.5 hours..because...children. This morning I felt exhausted and the weather was so cold and rainy. The Dutch apparently have skipped the summer season entirely ☹️ I made a plan of going running later on the afternoon.



Then I read a story of the girl who has MS and collapses on the floor after each run. **I also saw a post from a brave woman who despite her Rheumatoid arthritis diagnosis has taken part in so many Marathon events.** I then thought of all the strong men and women I have met and who are so supportive to each other every single day. **So I stopped stalling and headed out.**

Thirty-three minutes, 5km and a lot of Rocky themed music

later I was back enjoying a nice cup of coffee celebrating my own record-breaking time. **(Almost) everything is possible** ☐

Till next time xxx

“Until you start believing in yourself, you ain’t gonna have a life.” – Rocky

Teaching children real values

My daughters’ school organised a charity event a few days ago. They had to run as many laps as they could and raise money, this way, for the charity of their choice. It wasn’t compulsory for all the school children to attend, although, they all did.

Days before the event, I felt like explaining to them what that would be all about. Although we often, in our family, talk about giving and helping others, the idea of raising money for a charity wasn’t quite understood. I showed them photos online of charities, other fundraising events, children in need around the world and explained how this kind of helping works. They had questions, of course, which is always good. Then they were sad and then... excited!

Learning how to be kind, good-hearted, considerate, compassionate, giving, positive and everything else good starts from home!





My daughters were now looking forward to try, to do well, to do as many laps as possible so we raise more money. We arranged to do a little training and since they watch me exercise almost every day, the notion is already a familiar and positive one. We went for long walks and practice runs while listening to music and having fun – yes, we actually did some outdoor dancing too ☐

I always try to make my daughters understand that the result doesn't really matter much – they can only do the best they can.

On the big day, we watched them both with a lot of pride and felt glad that schools promote these kind of activities and humanitarian thinking. Not wanting to brag (hehe) but, from the maximum of 22 laps my daughters ran 38 and 33 respectively ☐ (I know, I know... I'm bragging)

The kind of people your children will grow up to be is right now depending on you! Teach your children the right values in life.

Well done to [BS Lahrhof Primary School](#) for organizing it and to all the children who took part in the event ☐

Dieting advice is easy to follow. For thin people.

It's been almost a year since I started exercising and eating better. Or trying to eat better. I used to be a normal-weight teenager, even trained in athletics. But an indulgent student life, wild nights, stress and a motherhood later, the kilos have piled up. Paired with the lack of time to do any kind of exercise at home or at the gym, the results for my body and health were not that positive any more.

I am familiar with every type of exercise and most health eating regimes – I was a gymnast for years, after all. But I thought that I should do a bit of research on all those compact high-impact workouts for busy people which are supposedly so easy to do at home. There are hundreds of 'professional' videos and articles online. Health nutritionists, trainers and all sort of 'weight-loss experts'

are always advertising their products to desperate people who want to lose weight and look better.



I noticed that all these experts looked perfectly thin and toned. Most of the exercises were kinda difficult – I could only imagine how a really overweight woman could manage to do them. **The healthy eating advice is targeting an audience of people who don't like food.**

The whole [weight-loss](#) market online is designed for people who are already thin or need to lose a kilo or two.

What were those busy, stressed-out moms that had to lose more than a kilo supposed to do? I decided to ignore all that “professional” stuff, but was determined to look and feel better. I was too busy to go the gym and too tired to keep counting calories and measuring grams every day. Needless to say, adding a different dish for me to the daily cooking routine was expensive and exhausting. So I did a lot of thinking. **The relationship people have with food starts from childhood and unfortunately continues until later on in life too.**

I come from a culture that takes cooking seriously and that is defined by a long tradition of amazing, rich cuisine. Eating, for us, growing up, was more than just eating – it was a time for family bonding, laughter and long conversations. Late afternoon snacking was also a ‘thing’ in my family. We would gather all together to play games or watch TV while my mom would serve those delicious pies and cakes. Being a child, food was paradise! But as an adult, how do you get out of those now ‘destructive’ habits?

I took it one step at a time. I made a diary of what I eat every day and how it makes me feel afterwards. I also noted the times and reasons for eating. I noticed that my emotional state was to answer for a lot of my binging. I put my children to



bed and went for late night walks. I made a commitment to go for at least a 30 minute walk daily or every second day. Even when I felt tired and wanted to relax I still went out for a walk or on a ride with my bicycle. I didn't like it but I did it.

Walking every day made me [feel good](#) so I decided to cut down on night eating altogether and have a more filling breakfast instead. I slowly cut down on sweets too and bread. **I still had the odd one here and there but they now are the exceptions, not the norm.**

I did not follow any 'diet'. I just decided to think before I eat and not indulge on anything that happens to be in front of me. I made healthier choices which also helped my family too. I chose to have smaller portions of any meal that was prepared that day and when I felt like eating more, I had a coffee instead.

It was a difficult process full of emotional ups and downs, disappointment, relapses, hurdles and struggle. Twelve months and minus 16 kilos later [I feel better about my body and health.](#) I also feel really proud of myself. I have now started the gym and try to go as much as I can. **I believe that everyone can do it. It is not easy but definitely worth it.**