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# Why I run

Excerpt from Aggeliki Kosmopoulou

**Today I cannot imagine my life without running.**

I could imagine it, in fact, but I would not like it. One month of enforced abstinence in these past years was enough to convince me that a life without running is smaller and much less joyful. With this knowledge to guide me, I have defended my choice so many times over the years that followed – both in word and deed.

**Like all long-distance runners, I am frequently asked why I run.** The answer changes with the years, as I change too, and it is no longer one answer. There are many, as many as the times I go out onto the road.

**I run for the well being I feel after training.** For this vitality it brings for hours afterwards. I run to see my body working well and becoming stronger. I run because it makes me a better person.

**I run to test and to confirm my endurance.** To be reminded of my strength and to use it for something better, in real life. I run to take my boundaries a little bit further, to become, day by day, something that is better and more human.

**I run to find solutions that are not provided reason and logic** – those which only an immersion into the cosmos can bring me. I run to temper my anxieties and fears that seize me – and which are demonstrably tamed by each kilometer. To conquer the road that opens in front of me, to master it, to sweep it away.



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**I run to dream without limits.** I run so that every day I do something for me, instead of losing myself in work and obligations. I run to return to my core being. To remember who I really am (and sometimes, to forget).

**I run to rejoice in nature:** in the waking mornings at Delikipos and Athalassa Parks, under the starry skies, the sunset, the tread on the earth. I run simply for the joy of movement, the repetitive movement of the feet. For the joy of solitude – that which I feel when, at 42, with a complex structure of a life, I have the chance to be alone. To be silent, and to put one foot in front of another, until I hear inside me a forgotten voice which is drowned out in my everyday life. For the joy of company, which is difficult to find, but when one does find it, gives a basic intimacy that no other space, place or circumstances can deliver.

**I run to improve myself.** I, in my most complete self. It puts me on the road in the mornings, it makes me persist. It wards off the troubles and the pain. In essence, it leads me to my first step and returns me to it. And that, my dear friends, I offer you from the bottom of my heart!

Nasos Ktorides  
*Marathon runner*