Glad you’re thinking proactively about your 2017: super helpful to set yourself up for success on the road. The more thought and honesty you can give to this worksheet, the more effective the goal setting webinar will be. So please fill this out PRIOR to your session December 5-11.

Before we dive into particulars, let’s consider vocabulary for a minute.

**GOAL: Heartfelt, scary, exciting, and big**

- Primary importance; dictates higher-level planning, not day-to-day specifics
- No time limit
- No deadlines
- Always in progress, always in the background
- Matters to you in some tangible way
- Probably won't ever change
- Path forward is highly customized

Examples of goal: Qualifying for Boston; running under one hour in a 10K; running a half-marathon in a certain time; completing an Olympic triathlon.

**TARGET: A step along the way that gets you to your goal**

- Secondary importance to goal
- Defines day-to-day training and schedule
- Falls into specific dates
- Allowances for space for breaks in between targets
- Results of target races say nothing about you
- Will change often, and can often blow up because of injury, family circumstances, life
- Each gives us reams of data pointing the path forward

Examples of a target: Doing the Marine Corps Marathon (Implies absolutely nothing other than you’re running regularly and going to cross a finish line after running 26.2 miles.); running a half-marathon with a friend (again, just says you’re going a certain distance with your BRF); running 100 miles in a month.

We can have more than one target in a training year, and some targets may be more important than others. That said, we must carefully avoid assigning false importance to individual targets. They are not your goal. Targets blow up all the time and we have to go with the flow. There is no single target that can predict the future, define you, define the training cycle, or determine whether or not your goal will ever happen. We cannot let one target deter us on our journey towards our goal.
MY RUNNING GOAL
(Note: This can be for 2017 or in the future; if it’s in 2017, we’ll need to discuss to make sure you’re setting yourself up for success.)

Now is that all? Really? Do have another goal? Maybe a secret one? No judgment here, we just need to get it out there.

Anything else you want to write down now?

Feel better? No? You’re scared? AWESOME! That means we are onto something!

SCHEDULE CONSIDERATIONS
In selecting our targets, we need to consider the convenience of training before we compile a list of possible races. The ideal race isn't so ideal if it conflicts with a busy season at work, a busy season at your kids' school, or any time of year when time is limited or circumstances render training strained or impossible.

People who live in northern Vermont will prefer to use their winter for maintenance and strength-building cycles and save their toughest running cycles for late summer/early fall. People who live in Phoenix and Florida will prefer to do all of their outdoor training and the bulk of their racing during the winter months, returning indoors for strengthening and cross-training before the oppressive heat and humidity of summer returns.

Which season in your location make the most sense for you, weather-wise? Once you have your answer, go to the last page of this guide and highlight the season that makes the most sense, weather-wise, for you to train with focus.
Weather is only one component though. We are also Chief Operating Officers of our households. Families with children involved in AAA hockey will have limited time in winter and spring, while families with kids on traveling baseball teams will have more constraints in spring and summer.

**Which season of the year is most open for you, COO-wise?** Again, go to the last page of this guide and highlight the season, COO-wise, that makes the most sense for you to train with focus.

Is there a time of year or block of weeks you will need to be training blackout periods because of your COO responsibilities? Back to the last page of this guide and black out weekends, weeks and other dates, COO-wise, that make no sense for a race or intense training.

*Other responsibilities now. If you know your sister is getting married in June, we probably wouldn't want to plan a marathon in July. If you are a lobbyist, we probably don't want to schedule a target race during a critical Congressional session.*

Please list all of the big events you can foresee for 2017. Leave nothing out, even if you don't have specific dates yet. Then go to the last page of this guide and black those dates that make no sense for a race or intense training.

**Races!**

Now a FUN ONE! Make a list of all the races you usually do or want to do in 2017. Be greedy, and be honest.

Go through the race list and circle the ones you will be crushed to miss. Then head back to the last page: Circle the dates of the must-do races. This might not be the year you reach your (secret) goal(s), so it is very important not to feel deprived of the motivation, camaraderie, and energy that races bring. You may not be able to do *alltheraces* but with good planning you can definitely hit some good ones. (Also, with the races that aren’t circled, can you volunteer or otherwise somehow be involved?)
Tools for Success

**Time**
How much time do you truly have for your running routine on the weekdays and weekends? Does it change with the seasons? “Routine” means getting ready, running, strength, showering. Also include foam rolling regularly. A 60-minute run really requires at least 80 minutes (at a minimum) with dressing and showering. This is a big factor in picking a target and a plan; better to nail a plan than only have time to execute 65% of the workouts.

**Support**
If you have a partner, is that person supportive and actively on board? If not, are you able outsource the necessary support so you can execute your training? (After this session is done and you have a set schedule, we highly recommend sitting down with your partner and talking about your year and how it will flow. Note the times you’ll need extra support as well as the times your running will wane off a bit.)

What are other sources of support you can turn to?

**Body**
What do you currently have physically that your goal requires? (An aerobic base, mental toughness, an injury-free body, core strength, etc.)

What physical assets do you need to strengthen? What steps will you take to do that?

Do you have a local physical therapist (ideally with an OCS—orthopedic clinical specialist—certification) that you have met with and trust with your body? If not, it’s a good time to find one and meet at least once so you avoid the I’m-injured-my-race-is-in-10-days-I’m-screwed situation. Because those suck.
Bigger stuff now. Giddyup.

What do you need in order to feel successful in your targets as you head towards your goal? What factors will you consider when you cross a finish line and think, “I nailed it”? It may be losing weight; it may be beating a certain somebody; it may be a time on the clock; it may be staying injury-free. List them all.

What will make you feel like a failure, even if you were to achieve your goal? This question is designed to mitigate situations like executing a great race, but still feeling crummy because you’re carrying around 15 extra pounds or not having your dad acknowledge that you ran a strong half-marathon. Recognizing and identifying your qualifications for success and failure is crucial.

What are your biggest fears with regard to your running targets and goal(s)?

Given everything you’ve processed in this exercise so far what, in your opinion, is your obvious best next target?