



## Balance: the key to running this marathon

After months of professional and personal preparation, the starting pistol has fired, and the marathon has begun. Look to your left, and your right. You are surrounded by fellow COSCOM Soldiers and civilians, all running the same rewarding race toward the end of global terrorism.

As we embark on this deployment marathon, we must remember it is just that, a marathon. Face it fueled with a sense of balance, dedicated to crossing the finish line having used this deployment as

a time for personal and professional growth.

I personally try to achieve this balance by checking in with myself daily, weekly and monthly, making sure I am running toward a life of spiritual, mental and physical fitness. It is this total fitness that ensures I will have

the strength to finish this marathon.

Each night, I ask myself, "Did I do some form of physical training today? Did I do my daily devotional, and write in my journal today? Did I face this day, having gotten at least five hours of rest the night before?" If I can answer yes to all of these questions, I can add one more day of total fitness to my marathon matrix.

Building on this daily balance, I make a weekly visit to the hospital, no matter if

I know anyone there or not, just to let our Soldiers know they are in my thoughts and prayers. This, combined with attending chapel every Sunday, allows me to exercise my spiritual and mental muscles.

Every Friday, as I take the first bite of my weekly cheeseburger, I ask myself, "Did I earn this cheeseburger this week? Did I grow personally and professionally? Did I make a difference in someone else's life?" As my cheeseburger tally increases, I know I successfully ran another week of the marathon.

At least once a month, I send a mass email to my friends and family. Remaining mindful of security, I share the progress we are making over here, the constant presence of teamwork, and a few stories about the Soldiers I am running this marathon with, not so much what they do, but who they are.

When we are thirsty during this deployment, our battle buddies, families and friends will be standing on the sidelines, holding out cups of support, and cheering for us to keep running. Actively embrace their cheers, and provide the same support to your battle buddies. We are going to need each other to get through the inevitable low moments, and to rejoice in the high moments of this deployment.

I'm excited to run this marathon beside each and every one of you, and look forward to celebrating our success at the finish line.

*Rebecca S. Halstead  
Brigadier General  
Commanding General*

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