

5. Be Unshakeable

Hebrews 12:1-3

What's your why?

I'd love to shake off a few kilos... why? Because I need to. Because it would aid health. Because it would be good for me. Because I should. Because I ought.... This is all well and good, but oughts, shoulds and needs don't have a great record when it comes to surviving a weight-loss effort. For me anyway. What might work though is a 'higher why'. A 'why' that's real. A 'why' that matters.

I plucked up the courage in the end, and launched into a monitored eating and exercise program and so far, so good. Short term target of 10kg. 2.4kg down, 7.6kg to go! Then I got talking to someone who unwittingly shared that her mother had just thrown out 15-years-worth of diet/exercise/healthy-eating material, calling it all a 'waste of time'. Not so encouraging for me as I once again will away the lure of a snack, and instead plug away at yet another glass of water.

With eyes fixed on discouragement, 2.4kg feels pathetic. Futile. A tiny drip of hard-earned gain in an ungrateful ocean of 'not-there-yet'. But then the phrase returns to me: "What's your why?"

You've got to have a pretty good 'why' if you've got any chance of surviving the inglorious mundane of 'sticking with the program'. The 'why' matters. It's the thing you choose to look at in times of discouragement and distraction, that refreshes and reframes the purposefulness of every miniscule step.

I re-look at my 'why' and see the cascading impact of every kilo shed yielding new lightness, new energy, new freedom reclaimed from the captivity of heaviness. I think of all it means for me. I think of all it means for my family. It helps me throw off the lures, the temptations, the distractions, the discouragements, the things that hinder and so easily entangle.

And I contemplate Jesus as he takes yet another burdened step toward the cross, amidst mockery, misunderstanding, ungratefulness, and hostility. And I reconnect with His 'why' as he shook off all the things that hinder, distract, entangle. For the JOY set before him, he ENDURED the cross, he SCORNEED its shame, and he TOOK HIS PLACE at the right hand of the throne of God.

"The verses above offer us two pieces of practical advice to enable us to keep it up for the long haul and reach that maturity. First, for us to BE UNSHAKEABLE, we need to shake off anything that hinders or distracts us. Whatever takes our eyes off Jesus needs to be recognized as superfluous and dealt with as soon as possible, before it has the chance to turn us into quitters. Secondly, for us to BE UNSHAKEABLE, we also need to be shaken into action by the "great crowd of witnesses" spurring us on." (p. 43)

DO: What can you do practically to ensure you remain unshakeable in your faith?

SAY: How does Jesus being our trailblazer, running ahead of us, and our pacesetter, running beside us, help us keep going when we are tempted to give up? At the end of Jesus' endurance race, he "sat down at the right hand of the throne of God". How does this promise of rest help us shake off all distractions?

BE: Read, meditate on and memorize Acts 2:25–26 in light of the Hebrews passage above: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope."