

I invented jogging. Well, maybe not but in my mind I did. You see, in order to get into the Peace Corps and go through its training, I had to lose some weight, and to do so, I started jogging in my junior high school's yard, back and forth from fence to fence, maybe 50 times at a stretch. It worked (of course, together with a reduction in daily calorie intake).

While serving at my first teaching assignment, I was challenged to a race by a tall, thin member of the British empire who poked fun of my slightly over-abundant belly. I took him up on the challenge, knowing what I did about jogging. After all, I had invented it. We raced on the quarter-mile track on our school compound. I led him in our one-mile race over the first two laps, maybe by ten yards (sorry; I don't know the equivalent in kilometers). Then with maybe half of the third quarter-mile lap remaining, I decided to use psychology to outsmart him. I slowed my pace a bit, knowing how much of a kick I could muster on demand, and I *allowed* him to almost catch me, and then I sped out toward the finish line, destroying his spirit and loving every minute. I ran that mile in my best time ever, six minutes, though in the wisdom of old age I now realize that if I had not slowed down and played psychological games, I would have run the mile a perhaps five and a half minutes.

Over the next half-century, I did an awful lot of jogging. I often jogged five to eight miles a day, for several weeks at a time. I did the proper stretching exercises before starting my jaunts. I was never very fast; that wasn't my goal. But I was persistent, similar to the tortoise was in his race with the over-confident hare – and you know who won *that* race.

In any event, eventually all those miles took their toll and I developed knee problems and was prescribed a course of physical therapy to deal with the associated pain, stiffness and all that. It has worked very well so far. It even allowed me to survive a nine-day vacation in old Quebec City, where every street seems to be up or down but not level, and where one with knee problems should *a/ways* stay in a hotel with an elevator and never in a condominium complex in which one has to walk up or down long flights of stairs! (NOTE: This poem was actually written while I was waiting for one of my physical therapy sessions to begin.)