

## **Running groups: Why you need them.**

Written by David Kawahata, Fitness MD (916)626-5507

IFPA Certified Personal Trainer, Nutrition Specialist and Program Design Specialist

[www.fitnessmdonline.com](http://www.fitnessmdonline.com) . [david@fitnessmdonline.com](mailto:david@fitnessmdonline.com)

There are a number of different reasons people decide to run: weight loss, training for a specific event, or for just pure enjoyment (we normally term these people as “runners”). Whether you’re a “runner”, training for a specific event, or just trying to shed a few pounds you may want to think about running in a group.

Running as a “sport” is always thought of as an individual activity, although it doesn’t have to be. Here are some reasons why running in a group may be more beneficial than at first glance.

### **Accountability**

Sometimes it gets a little difficult to drag yourself out of bed for that early morning run. However if you have a partner, or a group of people, counting on you to show, most people are much more likely to be consistent with their running schedules.

### **Motivation, Competition, & Performance**

We’ve all had those days when we set out to run a specific pace but our mind and body disagree with our intentions. Running with a group may ignite that motivational fire inside of you to help push you to your limits. Though most running groups tend to stray away from internal competition, most people have at least a little bit of competitive edge that will help push them a few extra strides. Running in a group will without a doubt, increase your training performance, which in the end will definitely increase your race day performance. We’ve all heard the term “practice like you play, and play like you practice”.

### **Social Benefits**

As with any social group, a running group is a great place to meet people with similar interests. A lot of relationships have been started or built stronger while hitting the pavement during group runs. Even work relationships can be built through a running group. A lot of people think of golf as a way to talk business while having fun, but a lot of business deals have been made while sweating on the streets too. Go for a run, make a business deal, get healthier and fit, and make a new friend... that’s a productive hour.

### **Life Issues**

I’ve always found it funny that there seems to be two ways to think & talk about our life issues. Some people go to a therapist and lay on a couch, and the others do the complete opposite, and strap up their shoes and go for a run. Anyone that runs knows that one of the huge benefits of running is to clear your mind and think about all of life’s issues. What people don’t realize is that running in a group and talking with running partners is the “runners” equivalent to lying on the couch talking to a therapist. Group runs are a great place to bounce ideas and frustrations off other people and expend not only physical energy, but mental energy as well.