Unemployed tend to exercise more

By Bill Bradley, Outside

I lost my job in December. The writing had been on the wall since the first round of layoffs in July. No one was surprised. The company treated the departed well and ushered us out the doors with severance papers in hand. I'd been employed since I was 14—thank you, Stan at the Cottage Café, for giving me my first shot—and had no clue what to do, so I just started running.

I've been a runner since I was in junior high, so it's not like I lost my job and went full Forrest Gump. I ran my first marathon in October while still employed. (A complete disaster.) Without the constraints of a desk job and with new found free time on my hands, I ran whenever and for however long I wanted. Gone were the days of squeezing in five miles before work. I sure as hell didn't have anywhere else to be.

A 2011 study from the National Bureau of Economic Research found that white-collar workers exercise more when they're unemployed. "From an economical jargon, the time cost or opportunity cost is now lower," said Dhaval Dave, co-author of the study and economics professor at Bentley University. "So you should see a lot more people exercising."

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