



As the dust settles after my amazing experience at the [#MarathonDesSables](#), I have had time to reflect. This has been an amazing journey - not only the race itself, but also my physical and mental preparation and, of course, the journey that I have walked on [#XtheStress](#).

Whilst I have always recognised that [#Exercise](#) make me feel better, I have learned so much over the past months about the mechanisms behind it, and have gained such an appreciation that [#PhysicalActivity](#) is a powerful tool for any of us to self-regulate our [#MentalHealth](#). And by no means does one have to go run some crazy distance in some far away desert. A gym session, or a surf at the local beach or a walk in the park with friends is just as good. In fact, it's better because these are small, everyday lifestyle modifications that can literally be life saving. And it starts with manageable, incremental changes. Be gentle with yourself. Any exercise is far better than nothing.

I have also gained a massive appreciation for the power of community. The messages of support, words of encouragement and general interest from the community (both in-person and online) has left me absolutely humbled. Thank you for your interest in my [#MDS](#) journey, but more importantly thank you for your interest and compassion for [#MentalHealth](#). While I was in the desert, even when I couldn't see anybody else, I constantly had that feeling that I was not alone. Thank you for being with me.

MDS may be over, but [#XtheStress](#) continues. Over the next couple of I'll be doing some radio interview interviews, and there should be one or two print articles being published. Also, the [X the Stress Virtual Event](#) is still running until the end of April. Please do sign up if you haven't yet had the chance to do so. All proceeds go to supporting the excellent work that SADAG does in the mental health space.



I hope, in the last week of the X the Stress Campaign, we continue to stoke the important conversations around Exercise in Mental Health. And I wish for you all the joy of movement.

Dr Gwen Morgan
Specialist Anaesthesiologist | X the Stress