



What's Stopping You?

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Created by Chris Nielsen

Objective: life skill development

Working intensity: moderately hard to hard

Length: sixty minutes

Introduction

I was inspired to create this profile because I have been thinking a lot about how to move from 'What' to 'How' in our interactions with our students. Early in the year the ever-present 'What' is their New Year's resolutions. Each of those resolutions is a decision to make some kind of change. The first step toward 'How' is to help them identify the obstacles to change and to give them tools for confronting those obstacles.

This ride follows the pattern that I use in many of my profiles. I link effort and experience to some key ideas/phrases. In future profiles and coaching I will revert to those phrases (and songs) to emphasize a particular point or experience. In this profile I make several references to staying at or below threshold. In this context those references are a deliberate attempt to address the "no pain, no gain" approach to exercise and all other life skills. You should not infer from the text that I don't believe that there is a role for interval work and the improvement of the ability to work above threshold.

This is a reflective ride and each of the songs was chosen for its lyrics and dynamics. If you are uncomfortable being relatively silent during your classes, this profile will help you develop the skill of saying little to nothing. The lyrics do your talking for you.

Pre-class music

A Time of New Beginnings, Chie Amaizumi, 8:45

When I am doing a message-based ride I like to use appropriate music to get people in the mood before I say anything. This jazzy piece builds as it goes and sets people up well for the meat of the message you are going to deliver in the warm-up.

Warm-up

Waves of Change (Kascade Remix), Samantha James, 64/128 bpm, 5:40

Guide the class through a gradual ramp of heart rate/effort. There will be opportunities for increased effort in the next song.

Try to fit your introductory remarks into this first song so that your only words during the second part of the warm-up will be short bike-related cues.

As the calendar turned to 2013 earlier this month, I am sure that all of you made a decision to make a change or two in your lives. Those decisions might be fitness-related

but they may also apply to other aspects of your lives. Whatever you have decided, one thing is true. There is one or more obstacle standing between you and your goals. If that weren't true you would all be fitter, thinner and richer right now, wouldn't you?

What's holding you back? Do you know? Have you thought about it? The first step in implementing change is to identify the obstacles to change. Only then can you make a practical plan to overcome those issues and move forward toward your goals.

Today we are going to examine three significant obstacles to change. I'll talk about each one and then you will ride through a period where you consider a reaction to that obstacle. I'll ask you to do some hard work during each of those periods. The work represents the fact that while my suggestions will seem simple they won't be easy.

Let's talk a little about effort. There's no place for heroics today. Please don't go over your heart rate threshold or find yourself truly breathless. You won't succeed by throwing yourself at a problem until you hurt so much that you never want to deal with it again. You know what that feels like or you have seen it happen. That's the people who starve themselves to lose weight or go to the gym on January second and work so hard that they never go back.

I'd like you to stay at a moderately hard to hard level of work today. Those of you who are monitoring your heart rate can think about working five to ten beats below your threshold. You might find yourself at or above threshold a couple of times. That's OK but make sure you back off at that point. Pure suffering is not the best way to overcome the obstacles in your path.

Change is Good, Rick Danko, 92 bpm, 4:11

As soon as the song starts cue an increase in resistance. You will be making a lot of changes in the next few minutes. Keep your cueing quiet and subtle so that the class can listen to the lyrics on the song.

There are only ten seconds before the lyrics start so you may want to initiate this section before the end of the previous song.

Before we move on to the three obstacles, I want you to listen to the lyrics of this song. Commit to its message. It tells us that change is normal. It is always happening. Your resolutions are just an attempt to control change in a way that brings benefit to you and your family.

at 0:38 cue an increase in resistance

at 1:02 cue increased cadence

at 1:30 cue a drop in cadence

at 1:50 cue an increase in resistance

at 2:19 cue a stand

at 2:38 cue a sit

at 2:44 cue an increase in resistance

at 3:06 cue a stand

at 3:30 cue a sit

Ride

Reflection #6, Metric, 56/112 bpm, 1:54

Encourage students to get a drink and do some active recovery.

Time the delivery of the next section so that you end as the next song starts.

This brings us to our first obstacle - the expectation that change will happen instantly. That's not how life works! Since you will probably need to learn new habits and skills in order to achieve your goals it is important that you understand that learning happens incrementally - one step at a time.

One Step At a Time, Jordin Sparks, 102 bpm, 3:25

As soon as the song starts, cue a fast flat with moderate to hard effort.

Listen to the lyrics. Think about how they apply to the way you learned skills here in the cycling studio. How could you apply them to your new goals?

The following is optional. I think it's important to add reminders like this early in the ride so that the participants will set their own standards for their work.

at 1:00

This is a fast song - 102 beats per minute. Remember, that's just your goal. You might not be there today. Don't let your determination to reach that speed affect your form. Find a leg speed that works for you and be confident that step by step you will get to the point where you can ride at 102 with no bouncing, a relaxed body and flowing legs.

Day by Day, Doug and the Slugs, 60/120 bpm, 3:29

It is challenging to find the patience to work through those steps. You want results now. We all do. I urge you to be patient and take it day by day. Let's add a lot of resistance to represent how hard it will be to stay patient and trust that the results will come.

at 0:24 cue a steep hill.

Reflection #1, Metric, 71 bpm, 1:33

This is a recovery opportunity.

Time your delivery of the next section so that you end as the next song starts.

This brings us to another obstacle. Change is most difficult when you feel alone and without support. There's lots of research to show that it is much easier to change when you are a part of a community of people who share your goals. Change is better together.

Better Together, Lynx, 96 bpm, 4:24

Cue a fast flat with moderately hard to hard effort.
...at 3:50 turn down the volume

The experience of working toward similar goals and through the associated difficulties will bring you and your fellow 'sufferers' together. You will become a family. There will be challenges to working with a group but in the end the bonds which connect you are stronger than what divides you.

Time your speaking so that you end as the next song starts.

As you pursue your new goals I urge you to seek out a group of like-minded people who can become a new family.

We Are Family, Sister Sledge, 60/119 bpm, 3:30

Let's drop our cadence to 60 rpm and add resistance that represents the hard work that you and your family will be doing together.

at 1:00

You may all be working toward the same goal but your path might be different from the next person's. That's OK. Feel free to stand if that will help you get through the rest of the work.

Reflection #6, Metric, 56/112 rpm, 1:54

This is an opportunity for recovery.

Time your delivery of the next section so that you end as the next song starts.

We have come to the last obstacle and probably the most important - fear. It affects us all. It might be fear of failure, fear of success (yes, it happens!), fear of pain, fear of the unknown. I have no magic solutions for you. But I do know that it is helpful to be honest about your fear. Don't hide it or run from it. Talk about your fear with the people who are supporting you. Then you must decide to be fearless. You will prevail if you take things step by step, one day at a time, with your family beside you.

Fearless, Pink Floyd, 73 bpm, 6:07 (with last part of the song removed, new length 5:30)

Sometimes the more you accomplish - the closer you get to your goal - the greater your fear can become. The cost of failure is higher at that point, the pain is more palpable and the "what ifs" somehow seem more and more important. It doesn't seem fair that the more you do the harder you have to work. The good news is that by the time you get to that point you have already proven that you have the skills and experience to be fearless.

This is going to be the most intense experience of your day. We'll start on a hill and it will become steeper and steeper as we go. You may reach a point where you don't think you can do any more. At that point be fearless: reach down deep and find a little extra.

Cue a hill. Give the class the information that there will eight increases in resistance after the initial one. Cue added resistance every minute.

No Fear, The Rasmus, 60/120 pbm, 4:06

Continue to cue added resistance each minute.

We are going to continue to climb past the fear. Just keep repeating - No Fear! Find your way past the discomfort and pain with that as your motto.

There are four minutes left. If you need to stand for part of the climb, that's fine. Remember what I said about pushing to the point where you never want to tackle the challenge again. Feel free to skip some increases if they will push you over your threshold. You will still be doing the work that is required to push back the fear.

at 1:30

If you listen to the lyrics you will hear that they refer to "destination darkness". I interpret that as the tunnel you find yourself in when you have successfully banished the fear and are on a straight path to your goal. It often happens to me when I am climbing a hill. I am unaware of anything around me. My peripheral vision goes black and I am only focused on the work I am doing and the goal I will achieve at the end of my journey.

Count down the remaining minutes as you continue to cue resistance increases. If you'd like, repeat the 'No Fear' lyric with the music.

Fear Has No Place Here, Rachel Leigh Ory, 63 bpm (in 3/4 so rides differently), 3:38

This is an opportunity for the class to recover. Cue a flat road but don't be too prescriptive about cadence. This song works well with a wide range of leg speeds.

Undaunted, Network Music Ensemble, 60/120 bpm, 3:12

Cue a flat road, cadence of 90 rpm, at moderate effort.

You have made it past some obstacles to change. Take a little time to reflect on your journey.

at :40

You have acknowledged that change takes time. Progress happens step by step, day by day.

at 1:37

You have sought out a community of people who will support you as you support them. The work you are doing binds you together as a family.

at 2:26

You have acknowledged your fear but you have pushed it away. You will be fearless.

Time your delivery of the next section so that you end as the next song starts.

It is time to celebrate change with a victory march. I am going to leave it to you to decide on the form of your march. Float home at a high (but controlled) cadence or add some resistance that is consistent with the challenges you intend to overcome. Whatever you choose it shouldn't be easy. It takes hard work to move through life. Remember that change is always happening.

Aida - Grand March, Giuseppe Verdi, 60/120 bpm, 3:24

This piece varies in tempo a surprising amount and speeds up at the end. It can be ridden as a climb at 60 rpm or as a flat in the 90s.

Here's your victory march.

at 3:00

Keep up the hard work. Greet change as it comes. Some of it will be planned but most of it will be a surprise. Just remember that you can get through anything if you push back the fear and address the challenge one step at a time, day by day, with a support system of your choice. Remember the first lyrics of the day:

*Change is yes, change is no
Change is everywhere you go
Change is right, change is wrong
Change is here, change is gone
Change is good*

Cool-down

Today, Chie Imaizumi, 5:55

Many Happy Days Ahead, Chie Imaizumi, 8:46

Structure your own cool-down and stretches.

Song	Artist	Album	BPM	Length	Source
A Time of New Beginnings	Chie Amaizumi	A Time of New Beginnings		8:45	iTunes, eMusic
Waves of Change (Kaskade Remix)	Samantha James	Waves of Change (Kaskade Remixes)	64/128	5:40	iTunes, eMusic
Change is Good	Rick Danko	Times Like These	92	4:11	iTunes, eMusic
Reflection #6	Metric	Synthetica	56/112	1:54	iTunes
One Step At a Time	Jordin Sparks	Jordin Sparks	102	3:25	iTunes
Day by Day	Doug and the Slugs	Slugcology 101	60/120	3:29	iTunes, eMusic
Reflection #1	Metric	Synthetica	71	1:33	iTunes
Better Together	Lynx	Sneak Attack	96	4:24	iTunes
We Are Family	Sister Sledge	100 Funk Essentials	60/119	3:30	iTunes, eMusic
Reflection #6	Metric	Synthetica	56/112	1:54	iTunes
Fearless	Pink Floyd	Meddle (Remastered)	73	6:08(5:30)	iTunes, eMusic
No Fear	The Rasmus	The Best of The Rasmus - 2001-2009	60/120	4:06	iTunes, eMusic
Fear Has No Place Here	Rachel Leigh Ory	Time Well Spent	63	3:38	iTunes
Undaunted	Network Music Ensemble	Big Screen Drama (Industrial)	60/120	3:12	iTunes, eMusic
Aida - Grand March*	Giuseppe Verdi	Classical For The New Age	60/120	3:24	iTunes
Today	Chie Amaizumi	A Time of New Beginnings		2:54	iTunes, eMusic
Many Happy Days Ahead	Chie Amaizumi	A Time of New Beginnings		4:09	iTunes, eMusic

*There are many options for this piece. Pick one where you like the sound of the horns and the progression of dynamics toward the end.