



## It's All About Balance

Ask my partner what his favourite sport is and he will, without a doubt, respond "Slacklining". For those of you who aren't sure what this sport is, you might have seen it on the beach. It's a flat **webbed** line that is set up between two anchors (for example: two trees) and then individuals, such as my partner will then **balance** and walk across it, or try to do certain **tricks** such as sitting down with their legs crossed. But it doesn't just stop there, there are many categories, including: highline (a slackline set up, for example, in between two mountains), jumpline (instead of walking across, the slacker performs tricks while bouncing on the line) and waterline (slackline set up over water) as some of you may have seen in St Gilles in front of the **waterfalls**.

When we first arrived in Reunion Island, four years ago, my partner would set up his slackline on the beach, which would result in many **stares** and looks of surprise, there just weren't that many people doing it here. There were even times when random people would break out in **applause** when a slacker would accomplish a difficult trick.

As time went on the slackliners on the island **formed** a small community, which eventually **grew** into a slackline association. **Nowadays** when you go to the beach there is a slackline set up every 20 meters, and you see everyone from children to grandparents testing out their balance. However, many of the **die-hard** slackliners tend to **stick together**, organizing meetings, events, and installations, sharing a passion that they all have in common, that of balance.

Slacklining on the island has evolved, just as the slackliners continue to evolve testing slacklines that are more and more challenging, longer and higher each time. Just last year a **well-known** slackliner from France, Nathan Paulin came to Reunion to break the Highline **world record** and **crossed** 403meters on his second try! He has since, broken this record and crossed a 1km Highline in France. Highlining isn't just about the slackline, it's also about the installation which requires lots of equipment and some **rock climbing know-how**, and there is also the mental aspect of getting over your **fear of heights**, the one time I tried a highline my brain somehow missed out on the "you are safe, you're wearing a **harness**" messages I was sending to it, and I was frozen with fear, I couldn't even attempt to stand up on the line as I was **hanging on for dear life**.

Connected to nature, the rush of adrenaline, working every muscle in your body as you attempt to fight the urge to **topple** to the ground, and just like many things in life slacklining is all about balance.





## Vocabulary

webbed line = sangle

balance = équilibre

tricks = figures

waterfalls = cascades

to stare = fixer (du regard)

applause = applaudissements

to form = former

to grow = se développer

nowadays = de nos jours

die-hard = fervent

to stick together = rester ensemble

well known = bien connu

world record = record du monde

to cross = traverser

rock climbing = escalade

know-how = savoir-faire

fear of heights = peur du vide

harness = baudrier

to hang on for dear life = se cramponner de toutes ses forces

to topple = tomber