

## The Road to Adventure is Paved with Self Discovery!

No one truly knows themselves until they go on...and on, and on, and on. ...way beyond their familiar comfort zones.

Physical challenges present an extraordinary opportunity to discover who you are and what you are made of! As with life, physical demands aren't always easy, nor are they always an appealing or particularly romantic endeavour, but with each hurdle overcome, each mental resistance surmounted, each fear defeated, each kilometre chalked up, you often discover a profound depth of character and self-reliance that would remain obscured, unknown and untapped in the warmth and comforts of daily life.

Physical challenges are my spiritual path. I seek personal discovery through the pursuit of physical adventures.

The journey to be vitally fit, healthy and strong is a spiritual and compelling one for me. To be at my physical best I have to be at peace with myself, in balance with my emotions, determined and disciplined in my training, gentle with my body, persistent in my commitment to myself, willing to endure pain and set-backs, courageous in my efforts to improve, mindful of my priorities and I have to be unrelentingly enthusiastic in my heart! I also have to eat extraordinarily well, rest optimally, think optimistically, trust my processes completely, turn-up no matter what the weather or temperature, develop mental toughness, expand my sense of humour, be creative in my approach to training and I have to continually be willing to 'fail' in order to grow...

To have wild, lofty, hairy, audacious goals is the easy part. To turn up to the daily grind in preparation for these goals is another reality entirely! I love big goals...I discover myself in the journey toward their attainment... often I have not 'succeeded' in the achievement of my lofty goals...but the journey toward their realisation has always been deeper and more personally fulfilling than I could have dreamed at the outset...

There have been many uncomfortable set-backs along the way – depression, haemorrhoids, fibroids, heavy drinking, lack of self-belief, sugar addiction, fear - there always are. I am not alone in this. But as I have continued to turn up to myself, day after day after month after year, I have discovered that the most precious gifts are often hidden in the muddiest and most unlikely of places – training and racing for me.

When I don't feel like getting out of bed, when it is cold and wet and windy and dark outside, that is the moment of truth...I can choose to grow or choose to stagnate...when I hit snooze I have made a very clear choice - stagnation. 99% of the time today I am able to get up and turn up because I look after myself to the absolute best of my ability. I didn't always think I was worth it...now I know no other way than to feed and fuel and care for myself with unbridled abandon and steadfast commitment!

I love to feel the fullness of my strength, fitness, radiance, health, vitality, energy, enthusiasm, confidence and playfulness – these things are an integral part of my soul: developed and refined through dedicated participation in my own physical, mental and emotional expansion. There is nothing I would trade for these 'things'. I respect the immense gift of these feelings that I have for myself and about my being – forgive me but this is not arrogance, its excitement! These 'things' are

hard earned. I don't always completely want to do what must be done, but I do it anyway. I don't always want to swim 900m butterfly, do 100 pull-ups and 100 chin-ups, or run 3 x 2km repeats day after day after day, but I do it because I know that the sense of achievement and triumph over my own fears and perceived limitations is unparalleled. I meet myself in the darkest places of my being everyday! Eleanor Roosevelt once said '*do one thing every day that scares you*'. I agree, and I take it further, I do things physically, mentally and emotionally everyday that scare me...some days less, some days more...but every day and a lot!

I'm always learning, always 'failing', always searching further and I'm always growing. I wish this feeling of health and vitality on everyone...it is an experience that everyone should have at least once in their life, at least then people might have the first hand experience and necessary information in order to truly choose what level of health, vitality, strength, fitness and playfulness they genuinely want and choose in their lives. Life is an extraordinary adventure!

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