

Natural Healing Express Weekly

Column 208 Athletic Mastery – Cari Smulyan, Part 2

This week we will continue our interview with Miss Cari Smulyan, who just completed the Iron Man Competition in Madison Wisconsin. You can view the Part one of the Interview at <http://theflashonline.com/site/2015/09/10/natural-health/> . If you are not already registered for the site, they will very quickly send you a password and you can view the previous article.

Susan -What did you do to train for the IronMan?

Cari -Training is six months of building your endurance in swimming, biking and running. Then I add in three days a week of strength training and two to three days a week of yoga. I think yoga is one of the best things you can do for your mind and body. I was practiced on and off for years and came back to the practice about six months ago and it has played a huge role in my success as an endurance athlete with not only regards to performance but also recovery. Below is what a typical week looks like in the middle of the six months.

Monday: Yoga

Tuesday: 90 min swim workout and 30-40 min Run

Wednesday: 90 min track workout and 1hr strength training (sometimes an evening yoga class if I had time and needed it)

Thursday: 2hr bike ride and 1hr strength training

Friday: 1hr open water swim, 30 min run and 1hr strength training

Saturday: 85-mile bike ride and 30-45 min run

Sunday: 2:30-3:00 run and yoga

Susan -What are your future goals regarding this event?

Cari-My first goal is to continue to be able to race healthy and without injury and as long as I can do that I would like to do a couple more 140.6 (IronMan) – but I don't know what the future holds and the training for these races is very time consuming. My plan current plan is to spend 2016 focusing on areas of my swim, bike and run that need improving to become a stronger athlete. I am going to do a couple of 70.3 races also known as a half ironman. I really enjoy this distance, but once 140.6 are in your blood it's hard to not want to sign up for another one right away – especially when you don't get the time you think you are capable of. Again I will compare it to the Indy 500 – there are a lot of races you care about – but there is one you work really hard for all year and then in one day it's all over and you have to wait another year or more to be given another shot at it. This sport has taught me a lot of patience and that is what 2016 will be about. I have about three 140.6 races I have my eye on for 2017. I can't share my goal time with you because I am very superstitious but I know I have what it

takes to achieve it so I just need to make sure I keep my eye on the prize. If I meet my goal I will be sure to let you know!

Susan -How did it feel to finish this event as well as you did? Did you reward yourself with a big treat?

Cari-I felt amazing! The first full I didn't in Louisville was 98 degrees with a heat index of 104 and while I still had a great time my run had some...let just say challenges. When I finished I had felt solid and my GI track went right back to normal but I still had to go to the med tent for fluids and because of the toll the heat took on me I was exhausted and couldn't eat. This time however I felt awesome and strong. I was tired but I was also hungry – I was able to go and have a burger and some fries with my family before heading to bed and that was a real treat for me. In the week that followed I also indulged – my mom got me my favorite cheesecake from Ruth Chris and made a couple of my favorite meals. I try not to go too crazy because when you are in recovery you aren't working out and it is easy to let things get out of control.

Susan -One of your motivations for this event is to help share clean water with others, Can you tell us a little more about this cause and why this inspires you?

Cari -I love racing for a cause because there is an extra motivation that burns inside you – it allows you to get outside of yourself a little bit. When you are training from any kind of race or event it is very easy to become self-involved and take yourself too serious. Racing for Team World Vision was important to me because I spent three months in Tanzania teaching in 2008 and I saw and experienced on a daily biases what it was like to struggle for clean water. Here are some quick facts that I found mind blowing when I learned them. These are some important facts!

- **Every \$1 that was donated in 2014 World Vision was able to turn into \$1.28**
- **Water changes the lives of children. They have better health, improved nutrition, and can go to school instead of spending the day fetching water.**
- **Through World Vision's comprehensive and sustainable water projects across Africa, \$50 will provide clean water for one person for a lifetime.**
- **More children die from diseases caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation than almost any other cause - more than AIDS and malaria combined.**
- **About every 90 seconds, a child under 5 dies as a result of diarrhea caused by contaminated water, poor sanitation, and unsafe hygiene practices.**

World Vision is an incredible organization that does amazing work all over the world and I love them because 85% of the money they raise goes directly to the people they are helping. This is almost unheard of in the world of non-profits.

Susan -How can folks help with this?

Cari-While the race is over you can still go to my page and support me and team world vision at the link below. You can also go to the World Vision Website to learn more and sponsor a child.

Donate <http://www.teamworldvision.org/participant/teamcari>

<http://www.worldvision.org>

Susan -Do you have other inspirations for competing?

Cari -I don't know how many more full Ironman I will do. I know I will do one in 2017 and I can't say what will happen beyond that. I would love to do an ultra-marathon but that scares the pee out of me and I am not sure I could do it.

Susan –How funny! What would be your utopia regarding this event?

Cari -That is a hard one; I would like to say if I ever achieve my secret goal time. However I think if that happens I might then want to see if I could push it even further. But for now it would be meeting my secret goal time.

Susan -Did family or others play a role in your participation?

Cari-Family, friends and my other teammates play a huge role. I wouldn't be able to do this without them. The endless support my family gives me is overwhelming. Especially from my Mom, I can't properly put into words how grateful I am. My Mom has come to all my races, starting with my marathons. She is 5'2" and this little force of nature who just is there cheering me on with a balloon so I can find her. I am also really luck that my aunt (her sister) and my cousin have also been able to come to most my races.

One of the things I love about the world of Ironman is how tight knit and small it is. It doesn't matter if you train with someone once or meet them at a race or you just find out that you both are ironman there is an instant connection, it is like a fraternity. I have met some of the most amazing people who will be lifelong friends because of it and it is the coolest thing. I did most of my training for my first IM solo and then I friend on Facebook connected me to a friend of hers who had done Louisville before and was training for a different IM in Florida, Danielle and I started training together and became instant friends.

I recently moved back to Los Angeles and having lived here before I have a lot of wonderful friends but one of the greatest gifts was finding my gym called Trifit. There I met one of my now coaches Bernard who told me he was training a group for the Mont Tremblant race in Canada and that I should train with them. It was so much fun having a team to train with. I can't imagine doing another IM without the support of one. They pushed me and made me a better and stronger athlete. They have also become some of my dearest friends and I adore them. The support that we give each other is really something special.

Susan -I know you also own a fantastic jewelry company, could you tell us a little more about that? Possibly how folks could purchase?

Cari-You are so sweet. Currently my company is called Bubby's Vintage but the exciting thing is that what started out as a hobby has grown to include more than just repurposed vintage designs so we are launching a new website Nov 1st with a new name but in the meantime people can follow me on Instagram at @cariginger and visit our existing website bubbysvintage.com to get an idea of what we carry and purchase anything they fancy.

Susan -What words of advice do you have for folks who are considering participating in this amazing event?

Cari-This is a bit of an untraditional response to your question but I think the typical response could be found pretty easily online so I am going a little inspiration mixed in with advice. I recently found this quote and it has become my favorite so I would first give this to them.

"Start now. Start where you are. Start with fear. Start with pain. Start with doubt. Start with hands shaking. Start with voice trembling but start. Start and don't stop. Start where you are, with what you have. Just... start."

— Ijeoma Umebinyuolt

If you say to yourself you can't do this – it won't matter the preparation you do physically you won't accomplish it because your mind is more powerful than your body.

- 1. Don't let "I could never" be your excuse.***
- 2. Don't let other people's fancy equipment intimidate you.***
- 3. Don't compare yourself to others – wherever you are at is exactly where you are supposed to be.***
- 4. Have a plan and stick to the plan. You can't make up for the days you miss.***
- 5. Find a team and or training partner to hold you accountable.***
- 6. Find stories of inspiration online.***
- 7. Understand the importance of nutrition and meet with a nutritionist at least once.***
- 8. Training doesn't give you a free ticket to eat whatever you want. It is ok to indulge – but what you put in will affect every workout.***
- 9. Pain is temporary***
- 10. When workouts get tough start a gratitude list in your head or dedicate each mile to someone and focus on that person for the whole mile – you will be amazed how fast the time goes.***
- 11. Remember everyone has to start somewhere.***
- 12. Listen to your body***
- 13. Find a race that interests you***
- 14. Understand heart rate zones and how to train in them.***
- 15. There is such a thing as over training! Rest is just as important physical training.***

Susan -What words of encouragement would you share with those who are just beginning their journey to athletic mastery?

Cari -There is always a reason to stop - to stop swimming, to stop pedaling, to stop running and to stop trying. Find your reason to keep going!

Again, we are so proud of you. Thank you for sharing your amazing self and your incredible experience with our readers. Hope to see you soon in LA!

Enjoy! Hope to see you soon and as always, please contact us via one of the following methods. Natural Healing Express: Phone 815 990 8732, email: skscham@aol.com 204 W Main St, Lena, IL 61048.

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