
The Examined Life, Edition 9, July 2004
A free, electronic newsletter brought to you by:

Debra Exner, CPCC
Business & Personal Coach
Exner & Associates
Examine, Explore and Excel!
www.ExnerAssociates.com

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WE DID IT!

It's remarkable to be part of an experience so powerful that it makes a 31-hour travel ordeal fade into insignificance. A friend asked "Are marathons enjoyable?" Based on my Alaska experience, I'd say yes! I'm fitter than ever, have made what I hope will be lifelong friends, and had some truly memorable experiences.

I enjoyed getting to know some people on the Pennsylvania team on the trip and it was great reconnecting with the whole Atlanta, GA team on the morning of the marathon. I walked mostly with Dana, who sets a steady, challenging, but comfortable pace. We talked through most of the 26.2 miles, cheered on by volunteers at water stations every 2.5 miles. Signs along the way piqued our curiosity for mile marker 7. It looked like a pirate's cove with volunteers in costume and a new treat - peanut M&Ms! This was the beginning of the "off road" Tank trail, the easiest part of the course for me due to my extensive training in the woods, the most challenging part for some. Those water stops were highlights and you wouldn't believe how exciting it is to have someone offer you a Popsicle at mile 20!

It is difficult for volunteers to cheer enthusiastically for 6-8 hours, so the unfailing enthusiasm of some and the coaches who logged 30+ miles as they jogged back and forth to check on their team members -- showed real stamina! Just when I'd start to droop, there'd be a patient hero to remind me of how they appreciated what we were doing. And I had about a hundred bracelets pinned on to remind me of the names of my myeloma support group members and the loved ones of my donors.

It was especially fun each time we met up with my son Chris or Dana's Dad. Chris jogged 5 miles to catch up with us and walked along for the final 2 miles, which was a great help in forgetting about the enormous blisters on my feet! He and Dana's Dad were poised to take the "crossing the finish line" pictures. There was a huge clock marking our official time, so we put on a final burst of speed to make it by 8:04:52.

I know I was really tired and uncomfortable toward the end but it all vanished to a dim memory almost as soon as we crossed the finish -- amazing. Like childbirth but even quicker.

More touching than crossing the finish line myself was being there for GA teammates Lela & Myra. Lela has emphysema and the marathon was her sister Myra's dream. Lela overcame a lot of obstacles to continue training for the marathon so it was a wonderful moment when Long Haul Lela, carrying an

oxygen tank, crossed the finish line to the cheers and applause of her teammates and TNT volunteers. Her coaches Regina & Cookie helped to make it possible offering encouragement, carrying an extra oxygen tank and even snatching a bunch of balloons for the triumphant finish. It was an incredibly moving end to a great day.

Over champagne later, my Georgia team was talking about a reunion at the Rome marathon in March (groan!!). It starts and ends at the Coliseum and I hear the cobblestones (about a third of the course) are the challenge. In the meantime, I have been happily following the instructions in *The Complete Guide to Marathon Walking* (by Dave McGovern) including getting a massage, taking it easy, getting lots of rest, and maintaining a high-carbohydrate diet for at least three to five days post marathon. I may have to sign up for another just to enjoy these perks!

My current statistics:

Total Miles: 511 (since January 9th)

Longest walk: 26.2

Dollars: \$7,189.40 (almost 72% of my 10K goal)

I have posted some pictures at my personal page on the TNT website:

<http://www.teamintraining.org/participant/exner-166547>

It's not too late to be a part of this financial effort! I can accept contributions online or by mail until 7/19/04. Checks made out to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society or credit card information (amount, name on card, expiration date, and your address for acknowledgement by LLS) can be mailed to me at 724 Foxdale Road, Wilmington, DE 19803. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this effort through financial and/or emotional support!

It is amazing to watch individual goals, combine to make a the whole Team in Training effort and to realize how powerful we can be when we come together. The Alaska TNT effort has raised \$4.7 million so far.

TIP OF THE MONTH

There was a recent article in the Harvard Business Review titled "The Making of a Corporate Athlete" by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz. It's based on their book *The Power of Full Engagement* and the article is available for purchase at <http://doi.contentdirections.com/mr/hbsp.jsp?doi=10.1225/R0101H> The basic premise is that peak-performance in business is not built upon brain power alone and that high-powered executives and business owners will perform better if they build a firm foundation which increases their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual capacity.

In addition to eating well, getting physical exercise (cardiovascular and weight training) and maintaining consistent and adequate sleep, their research showed that, as with athletes, you can manage energy effectively by moving between energy expenditure (stress), and energy renewal (recovery). The key is to seek recovery every 90-120 minutes. This is best accomplished by establishing rituals. An example is the precise recovery rituals used by tennis players in the 15 or 20 seconds between points. They allow players to focus, avoid negative feelings and prepare. I've noticed that good musicians often do something similar to this, relaxing into a difficult passage rather than tensing up in anticipation.

The article suggests using five sources of restoration: eat something, hydrate, move physically, change channels mentally and change channels emotionally. The last of these may be the most challenging because it involves becoming aware of negative emotions and consciously substituting other rituals for habitual patterns. Examples include becoming aware of your body's signals, taking deep breaths, relaxing muscles, changing your tone of voice, and looking at the situation from a different perspective.

To increase spiritual capacity, the authors suggest connecting with your values and defining a stronger sense of purpose. Rather like tying your physical fitness efforts to a marathon/charity fundraising effort. It is about creating a sustaining sense of motivation for the work and personal goals in your life.

I know from work with myself and my clients that sometimes working less means accomplishing more. What recovery rituals can you create for yourself? How can you increase your awareness of negative patterns?

COMING EVENTS

Musical event: Schubert's Trout Quintet
Kathleen Hastings (violin), Sue Kiley (viola),
Cheryl Everill (cello), Debra Exner (bass), Nicole Clouser (piano)
Two performances:
Sunday September 26, 3pm Neumann College, Aston, PA
Saturday October 2, 8pm Newark Methodist Church, Newark, DE

MMRF Philadelphia 5K Race for Research Sunday, October 3
If you are looking for a way to get in shape, make a difference, and take advantage of having a larger purpose to keep you motivated, consider walking a 5K, 10K or other event for a charity that touches you personally. If you're local to Philadelphia, join me for the Race for Research in Fairmount Park. The entry fee is \$25 and if you raise \$100 or more for myeloma research the entry fee is waived. You can register here: http://www.active.com/event_detail.cfm?event_id=1147064

SPREAD THE WORD

If you are ready to make changes in your business and personal life or know someone who is, I'm looking for you. Curious? Email me at DExner@ExnerAssociates.com or call 302-478-5919 to schedule a complimentary half-hour coaching session.

If you are enjoying this newsletter, please forward it to your friends and colleagues! Or direct them to the subscription form and past issues at exnerassociates.com

Thanks,

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www.ExnerAssociates.com
phone# 302-478-5919

To desire and strive to be of some service to the world, to aim at doing something which shall really increase the happiness and welfare and virtue of mankind - this is a choice which is possible for all of us; and surely it is a good haven to sail for.

— Henry Van Dyke

Please let me know if you'd rather not receive these messages.