**FITNESS SPEECH**

**FOR**

**ABEL HERRERA**

Thanks for that interesting and informative introduction, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I guess it’s now time for me to do the “heavy lifting” .... just thought I would through in a little training humor... (**Wait for the laugh**)... that is, everything we do and face in life, particularly challenges that test our endurance, really are metaphors for the way we live our lives. When I agreed that I would do the “Tough Mudder” back in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I quickly realized several things.... it would be physically demanding..... it would probably be a really good idea if I prepared myself mentally and physically..... and... oh yeah... I better bring a clean change of clothes.... it’s not called the Tough **MUDDER** for nothing!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Self described as “an eight to ten.... or fifteen mile loop of mud soaked mayhem loaded with many best in class obstacles...” **YIKES**!!!! Seasoned athletes would have felt the burn... and then some from this beast of a course.... so how do we approach this kind of challenge? What can we learn from being willing to stare down the obstacles that greet us??? What do we have to do in order to live to tell the tale??

I knew I would need to focus on both endurance cardio training and strength weight lifting training. I remember that I saw people in the event that quit because they either didn’t have enough stamina, which would have come from endurance training, or they didn’t have enough strength training to help them get past some of the obstacles that called for lifting, climbing, and resisting poor traction throughout the course. While the event was designed to test all around fitness, it also tested our mental awareness, determination, and ability to focus on the “end game” which was completion.... and hopefully **NOT** death (**Wait for the laugh**). Believe me, this taught me to research, plan and prepare!

There are many benefits to training. Experts remind us that aerobic, or cardio training increases our capacity all around. It has the potential to improve our cardio respiratory stamina and endurance and regular exercise increases a person’s ability to use oxygen in their systems. It improves bone and muscle health, and let’s not forget those endorphins... which, by the way, aid in increasing our sense of well being. Weight training aids the body in other, complimentary ways and can increase lean muscle mass, reduce the risk of injury, and help to provide a greater sense of well being.... there go those endorphins again!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

We all have heard that doing physical activity is important and it’s even more important when we accept physically demanding challenges. While it is essential to prepare and condition one’s mind and body for tough physical tests, please also keep in mind that it’s really important to make sure you’re in good enough condition to face a “tough mudder” or any other demanding sport or race. It’s important to know your body... to know how to read the signs that might signal distress, and it’s also really important to build upon your exercise routine and grow and lengthen the training time each day. You wouldn’t run up twenty flights of stairs without pacing yourself.... you **DEFINITELY** want to make sure you can go the distance in any race or obstacle course that life places in your path. ... Also keep in mind that training doesn’t just take place in a gym... walk more... add ankle weights.... take the stairs... get off the bus a few stops early or park your car... or your Bird scooter further away... and walk to your destination... clean the house.... okay... maybe not **THAT** so much... (**Wait for the laugh**)... you get the picture...

It’s really crucial to be in good condition. It’s really important to do physical activity... it’s also **REALLY** important to make sure you’re doing enough exercise and doing it correctly, or you can risk injury. With that, here’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to remind us what can happen if we don’t prepare and exercise properly and with intention and focus...