

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

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Feeding your soul

You can't ride 800kms through Thailand over 8 days with 34 riders and not be filled with stories.

The story of Erin who raised almost \$20,000 and was fearful of not being able to raise her \$10,000.

The story of Bobby and his wife Amy who in six months raised \$26,000 whilst also supporting another charity or the story of the courage and commitment of the kids who rode the distances and at a

pace that inspired many adults to continue onwards.

There are many stories and many lessons that we all learnt along the way. It might have been the tour of the Khong Toei slums in Bangkok before we even started the ride which firmly and quite abruptly made us realise this was going to be something different.

The stories of endurance, commitment and riding through pain, not to beat someone to the finish line,

but to sit at the end of each day and reflect on the achievements of that day gone.

There was spills, there was blood, there was chaffing that I will spare you the details about, but for each rider the journey was so much more than they ever could have thought possible.

It touched their lives, in a way many weren't prepared for. It was so much more than a bike ride, it was so much more than a

fundraiser, it was a unique experience. We will do it again and a number of riders will back up for their second time or third time around. But it won't be the same - we won't share the laughs that we had with the same group of people. Sure we will laugh and have plenty of good times, but they will be different.

Working in Thailand after the Tsunami changed my life in a way I never could have thought possible. I learnt to enjoy each day and not let the lessons be lost on me.

I spent some time the other day with a great friend of mine [Dr. Adam Fraser](#) who is a brilliant speaker with a great message and he asked me "how do you not let the lessons fade away and drift back into your old routine?" I guess the answer is that it is like exercise.

You can't train for one 800km bike ride and think that will get you through the



following year, you need to keep training. So I think the answer to Ad's question is that you need to exercise your soul.

You need to feed it, you need to work it and you need to spend time nurturing your soul. A big part of that for me was having two of the Thai riders with us on the bike ride.

Yong is a 15 year old boy who has an amazing story and his words following the ride was a gift shared by each of the riders. It brought me to tears.

"The most wasted of all days is one without laughter."

E E. Cummings

Nong one of our staff from the orphanage who lost her two sons and her husband also completed the ride. The emotion as we got closer each day was evident for all to see. Another gift for the riders they couldn't have expected.

Nong has a scar on her heart from the loss of her family. That will remain, and we shouldn't try to remove that scar. But her smile at the end of the ride and the life that was in her eyes certainly was food for our soul.

HANDS UPDATE

There are some pretty amazing things happening with Hands at the moment and I hope to share those in the next newsletter. I have to return to Thailand in a few weeks and from that will come clarity and then I can share.

Suffice to say if you are thinking about the bike ride for 2011, you can get in early and get your name down - we will build the team in about six months.

But in the meantime you might want to join us for the Phuket Laguna Marathon in June of 2010 as a Hands event. There is a half marathon, a 10 km and other events if like me the full marathon is well beyond you. We will be taking a team over and if you would like to be part of it, let me know by contacting the team.