

[Getting #vFit at Interop Las Vegas - Daily 5K Runs Available Monday to Friday](#)

If you're coming out to Interop in Las Vegas, we have some fitness fun to add to your schedule!

One of the traditions that I have started at the VMworld event in San Francisco every year for the past 3 years was a daily run. This happened almost by accident as a fun run with a few friends which ended up becoming a full out planned event now on a daily basis at the event.

#vFit at Interop in Las Vegas

To join up for the run, [you can fill out this super easy survey](#) to let the Interop event organizers know which days you may want to join. I'll be there every morning at 7 AM to rock the pavement with you, and hope to see lots of my community friends there.

RSVP for our daily fun runs at [#Interop](#) (open to all attendees) // <https://t.co/EubZwvGqPE>
[pic.twitter.com/kMbh2FmzTm](https://t.co/kMbh2FmzTm)

— Interop (@interop) [April 19, 2016](#)

Thank you to the folks at Interop for making this a part of the official event schedule. It's a sign of how the community extends beyond the expo halls and conference rooms to every day.

See you in Las Vegas!

[Getting #vFit at the OpenStack Summit - Daily 5K Runs in Austin](#)

The #vFit daily 5K runs will be on like Donkey Kong, rain or shine at the OpenStack Summit in Austin!

What is now a 3 year tradition from VMworld has spanned to multiple events including the OpenStack Summit and Interop. In order to help to get your day started with a little fitness goodness, I will be leading out a daily 5K run group from the Austin Convention Centre which will take us along the Colorado River for a nice scenic out-and-back to get the blood flowing.

#vFit Daily Run Group Meets at 7AM at

Austin Convention Center

Run group will collect at the Austin Convention Center and depart every morning at **7 AM from Monday April 25th to Friday April 29th** to ensure we are back in time to shower up and be ready to face the day of action at the event. You can come out on any day and enjoy the community as we all keep our fitness up while chatting with the community.

Pace is a conversational 5K and if we have a large enough group, sometimes we do see a split for a faster crew if so desired.

Hope to see you out on the route!

[View route map for #vFit OpenStack Summit on plotaroute.com](#)

I Love Biking and Hate Cancer, and I Need your Help



Thank you for visiting to read about this very important subject to me. On June 8th and 9th I will be doing two things that I love dearly: riding a bike and raising money and awareness in the fight against cancer.

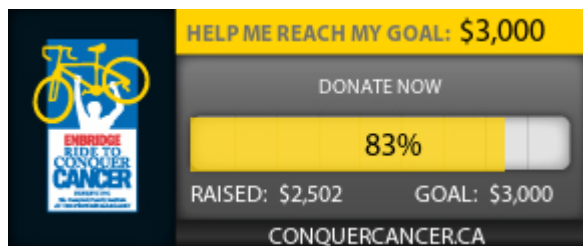
It wasn't too many years ago that I got the call. It was the call that my father didn't want to make, and nobody wants to receive. It was a phone call from Toronto to Vancouver to tell me that my Mom had lost a long battle with cancer.

Every turn of the pedals, every single time I ride is for a reason. It is to remind me how lucky I am, and how important it is to do everything I can to keep ahead of this disease. Cancer doesn't discriminate. We don't choose who wins and loses. We can only do our best in our own way and hope that it won't choose us or the ones we love.

I need your help to help others

Unfortunately, fundraising isn't my strong point and for that reason I am coming to the you, my community, and reaching out for help. I am leading a team of riders from my company in the first year that our local office has put together a team. I've done so much to ensure that the team has the support that they need that but I am in need of your help to reach my personal goal or else I won't be able to ride, and my goal to make my mark on this disease, even in this small way, may not be able to happen.

I know that it is a challenge to make financial commitments, but I hope that you or your organization can help me to reach my modest goal and I will be sure that your efforts and commitment are appreciated and shared as I pedal 200 km in 2 days to show this disease that we won't go down without a fight.



[Finding your thinspiration](#)

✘ This time of year is always a challenge. It is a time to celebrate, which we usually pair up with lots of dinners, treats, drinks with friends and so much visiting that the personal schedule is pretty much thrown out for the month, which also includes fitness time.

As a cyclist, I usually have summer targets for peak fitness. And by peak fitness, I mean to be able to generally keep up with the cycling group that I ride with. I've been cycling semi-competitively for about 6 years now which has helped me to maintain a fairly healthy lifestyle.

Challenges in life come along of course, and along with that can be unexpected changes in lifestyle. In the last year I had a number of changes in my lifestyle that resulted in a gentle decrease in fitness with a gentle increase in my intake. These two things combined together resulted in a 20 pound increase in my body weight.

This year I participated in the Tough Mudder event in Toronto. Because I knew that I was increasing my strength, I was more focused on doing resistance training and relying on a reasonable aerobic base to get me through the race. My diet plan was simple...no plan. I just ate at a typical North American rate of around 2400-2700 calories a day.

Diet and exercise are paired together...always. If you have one, or the other, but not both you will slip out of your overall fitness regardless of how much you increase the other.

Thinspiration

There is a term called "thinspiration" which is meant to be your thin-inspiration, or what it is that you see as your goal to reach a body image. I use a fitness goal as the only target, with the body image being the result rather than the desire. For me, there was a simple way to become "thinspired". I saw a picture of myself at the event and realized that although I was physically stronger because of my workout routines, that I was definitely carrying some extra weight.

This was my kickstart moment to get aggressive about my health and fitness again. On the heels of a great training year, I have now reduced my intake and changed my diet to be much more balanced. That being said, I also still enjoy great food and some sweet treats, but with the goal to either

counter that intake with exercise, or to reduce intake at other times to reach that balance overall.

Within the 12 weeks following the event I had achieved my goal of levelling my weight back to my “race weight” goal and also to ensure that I continue to use aerobic base training and resistance training to increase my power to weight ratio and build on my core fitness to be over and above where I have ever been in the past.

#plankaday



Part of my every day goal is now to add something called [#plankaday](#) to my routine which is to do a plank at least once a day, every day and make your goal to reach and increase your plank time each day. More than anything, the goal is to be consistent and to add that fitness regime to your daily tasks so that it becomes a priority, which is what your health and fitness should be!

In a week I have been able to get my daily plank time up to 2:17 and I have set my goal to reach 3:00 by January 15th which is a reasonable and achievable goal, but more than anything it is a goal.

Gentle changes make for simpler adoption

The long and the short of my story is that I was able to make gentle changes to my lifestyle in order to have reachable goals, and more easily make the diet and exercise plan easy to achieve within my schedule. I’m a single dad with two kids, so I’ve learned to be creative with squeezing in workouts including using home routines as simple as push-ups, planking and crunches when I don’t have a chance to get to the gym.

Not only has it helped me to feel better about my health, but it has inspired my kids to also make exercise a fun part of their day. There is not much better to inspire me than to know that my family will be inspired by ourselves.

I’m sharing my story because I want to be able to do anything I can to help others see that there are successes possible without having to make massive commitments to time and crazy diet changes. It’s also important to see that every day lifestyles can easily make simple changes to get you to feeling better about things.

I hope that you can find your thinspiration, and if anyone wants to learn any tips on how to make the same kind of gentle changes to their lifestyle to reach real, attainable goals, then feel free to add a comment, or [Tweet me](#) and I’d love to share in your journey to your own personal goals.

[Tough Mudder Toronto - The event recap](#)

The term epic comes to mind in trying to sum up the Tough Mudder event. On August 18th I was lucky enough to be a part of an amazing team of people who completed the Tough Mudder Toronto event at Mount St. Louis.

There was no shortage of people there (19000 participants altogether) and the levels of athleticism were varied, but the one thing that stood above all was that we were all one. One goal, one team, one day, one purpose. Nobody was there alone, whether they came as a single entrant or not, we all did this together.

This is not a race, this is an event. You don't win; you succeed.

We climbed over the 8 foot wall and into the starting gate at 8:20 AM on a cool but sunny Saturday. After getting up and out of the house at 5 AM to get up to the site we were still reeling from the anticipation as the Tough Mudder emcee/motivator began to fire up the crowd and we were released at 8:30.

As much as you can mentally prepare, we couldn't fully understand what we were facing. But one thing we knew was that we were as ready as we could ever be. The first hill immediately started to eat into the legs and it was a quick reminder that this was not just a flat land race. We had 16 km of intensity ahead of us.

First up, the Arctic Enema. A 5 foot deep pool of ice water. Not cold water...ice water. Not only did you have to get into the ice bath and wade through, but you had to submerge fully underneath a board. While we had already been entirely covered in mud from crawling under barbed wire for 20 feet, this took care of cleaning us off quite a bit. Everyone was watching, cheering, motivating and we got our first taste of team camaraderie right away. This was going to be an adventure.

Throughout the 16 km course there were 6 ascents up blue and black diamond ski runs all totalled along with lots of cross-country style running. The running was not as difficult as most of us had thought because it was never massive durations at high pace, but the trade off was that it was punctuated by intense strength challenges and muscle burning ascents and descents that would test your body and your mind.

Every essence of yourself was going to be put to the test here. Claustrophobic tunnels, ice water, deep mud-water submersion, climbing under barbed wire, dirt ditches, logs and then up and over everything from 10 foot walls to 15 foot rope fences. If you weren't already testing your height limits, the 12 foot jump into a pool of mud water rounded out that skill for you. Nothing seems high until you stand up there and look into the brown pool below knowing there was only one way down.

I leaned a lot about myself, and a lot about my team. We were 9 people who had actually never had a chance to train together. We were different in so many ways, but out there on that course we were one. Each of us had to overcome something along that route, and whether we were prepared for it or not, we fought through. I could write a page on the incredible work we all did at each obstacle. It goes without saying that each was a personal test, and a barrier that we each refused to succumb to.

The final few obstacles could not have been more appropriate. Log Jamming: Have you ever carried a 15 foot long tree trunk up a ski run and back down? Neither have we; until that day. But when faced with the challenge, our team was like a choreographed troop as we switched in and out to take turns at each point of the wooden beast. In only half a day we have learned where each of us was best to be in order to maximize our strengths and support each other when we needed it. This was a test. We passed with flying colours.

Next obstacle was named Everest. An impressive and daunting looking 18 foot tall quarter-pipe. We had our first team member surprise us, and even himself by tearing down that hill in a full sprint and he launched himself up that monster and climbed over. It wasn't just watching him leap to successfully overcoming the wall that made it awesome, it was the fact the first thing he did was turn around and lean back over reaching his hand for the next runner.

One by one we ran with every ounce of strength and leapt with faith at the hands of the waiting team members at the top. We were one. Nobody would be left behind here. It took some of us more than one attempt to make it up there. But even the crash of your body as you reached for the ridge and just watched it slip out of your fingers, would not make any of us give up.

One more hill. It was steep to the eyes and to the body. The angle was so massive at points that some even had to lean with hands on the hill to stay upright and not slip and crash out. Every part of your body was screaming at you to stop but the cheers and encouragement from fellow Mudders and from our team gave us each the strength we needed to come over the top and begin the beautiful descent into the finish line.

We couldn't have known what it was going to be like, but there it was; the final test. 40 feet away you could see the finish line, but in the way was the great unknown. A 20 foot long mud pit with water, mud, ruts and ridges. Running through this was going to be hard enough. Just to negotiate the uneven ground and not tear your ankle off was tough enough after 16 km of running.

That is when you start to come to the harsh realization that the hundreds of wires dangling from 10 feet overhead down to inches from the water and mud were pulsing with body halting voltage. 10,000 volts to be exact. It was impossible for us to know what it was about to be like, but it was named Electroshock Therapy for a reason. All that we knew was that as we held each other's hands for one last rally cry, we separated and launched with every bit of speed each of us had to face adversity with everything we had.

As I pushed through the first few feet I hoped that I would escape the pulsing as much as possible, and when the first one struck I immediately became aware of how difficult this was going to be. It shot through my entire body with every single muscle clenching like a taser attack for a full second. It was actually only about a fifth of a second in real-time, but now everything was moving like it was slow motion. I couldn't even reconcile what had happened and then the second one struck. I pushed forward with everything I had and watched my team mates as each of us faced our own personal hell for what felt like an eternity.

The third pulse struck, and then immediately after the fourth jolt surged through me and sent me to the ground. It was like watching a movie from inside. For a moment I looked through to see another 10 feet ahead of me of mud and wires. I launched myself up and was stunned again with another massive pulse. Pushing through, I stopped trying to avoid the wires because it was futile. There was only one way out and it had to be done by putting everything aside and going beyond your limits. For a moment, it really felt like it couldn't be done. But inside my soul there was no option to quit. We had to get to that line.

There were too many of us to go all through together, so we had 6 go through and then 3 followed a few seconds after. The first group looked back and everything inside us wanted to celebrate but all we did was look back to find our teammates. It wasn't about individual achievement. We would not cross the line without being together.

Two team members had hit the ground hard and were almost stuck in there being ravaged by the electric attack and fighting the muddy terrain to try to muscle through. They fought hard and it was amazing to watch. We must have all had that look as we came through. It was almost unreal to watch as it happened. Watching each person come through that obstacle and clearing the wires was like a personal victory for everyone.

Three and a half hours after we had begun, we crossed the line together with arms raised. We are one. We are Tough Mudder. See you there in 2013.



[Tough Mudder Time!](#)

Some time in the fall of last 2011 I was shown an event by a colleague at work. The email subject was something along the lines of "this is nuts...we should try it". My response was similarly comical. "This is crazy. I'm game".

There are a few moments in your life that you will see something that is beyond what you imagine you can do. The adventure comes when you share that thought with someone. It's not that I wish that I hadn't said that I would join into the event. I suppose there is not much of a better way to commit to a massive personal and team physical challenge.

The event is called Tough Mudder. For those who aren't familiar, here is a little video which shows you what it's all about.

Scared? I am. But any trepidation that I have about it is removed by the excitement of the challenge ahead, and the beginnings of a really great team of people to go through the experience with.

I will be updating along the way as we get closer to the event. Most importantly I will be working with a charitable organization to fund raise throughout training, up to and during the event. It's my firm belief that I am lucky to be able to participate in such an exciting event, so I would like do whatever I can to inspire others, and to raise awareness about physical activity and its benefit to everyone.

Because my primary sport is cycling this is a big departure from anything I have ever done. I am going to work as hard as possible so that I can step up to the task and help my team members as we tough it out through this gruelling, yet exciting event. It's going to be an adventure!