

# Pass It On®...

## How Far Can Mind and Body Take You?

*101 triathlons in as many days. That's what the Iron Cowboy found out. How far can you go?*

In the world of athletics, records are merely goals to be broken. In long-distance running, the marathon has long been the measure against which you pitted yourself.

The marathon made its way into athletic mythology by being the first race of the Olympics. It did, after all, take place in ancient Greece. As the story goes, when the city of Marathon was under siege by the Persians, the Athenians chose a messenger to run to Sparta for reinforcements. The distance was 26 miles and 385 yards. For hundreds of years, through almost countless Olympics, track events, city runs and competitions, the marathon held its place as the ultimate human feat — the longest human race, give or take a few brutal races like the 89-kilometer (55.3-mile) Comrades Marathon in South Africa, which began in 1921 and which only one-third of the runners finished.

Triathlons emerged in the 1970s as still another challenge, adding swimming and biking to a running race. Then, long-distance triathlons developed, often called IRONMAN® triathlons after the company that conceived them in 1978.

And then a brash young man, weary of the mundane corporate life, began training with his wife. James Lawrence is restless. His wife, Sunny, is curious and supportive. After their first marathon, Lawrence wondered just how far the human body could go. Triathlons seemed a good way to push the limits.

After 10 years of training, Lawrence accomplished what no human being had ever achieved: 50 iron-distance triathlons in 50 days in 50 states. The logistics make your head spin. The family lived in an RV for those 50 days and races, with Sunny as pilot and navigator, children as cheering section and Lawrence the automaton doing the same thing every day in a different state. Swim 2.4 miles. Bike 112 miles. Run 26.2 miles. Eat along the way. Sleep in the RV. Wake up and repeat.

"Nothing great is ever accomplished alone," Lawrence says often. The support crew of his wife,

family, community and friends has been one of his secrets to success. "We have to change our minds before we can change our bodies," adds Lawrence, now a motivational speaker for companies like Nike, Netflix, Sports Illustrated and more.

The world of possibility within us seems to be endless. Or so Lawrence wanted to find out. So he embarked on a new challenge: 101 triathlons in 101 days. Removing travel logistics and sleeping in his own bed seemed like a good idea.

"If we remove chaos and logistics, what's humanly possible?" Lawrence wondered. So he drew out the course that began with 90 minutes at the local aquatic center, a bike loop around the city that takes five to six hours, and finishing off the day with a marathon on a paved running trail — every day for 101 days. The daily routine required Lawrence to eat 10,000 calories daily to sustain his energy. And then there were the injuries from the constant wear and tear.

"The pain got to the point on some of the days where I would actually black out and then come back to and continue on." As incredible as the feat is, Lawrence credits the support of his family and community for his achievement. There were always people to ride and run with on those long days.

So what did James Lawrence, the Iron Cowboy, learn through it all?

"The mind is super, super powerful. You only gain mental strength by doing something." And Lawrence has done a few things: ridden his bike to the top of Kilimanjaro, run 235 miles across Greece, competed in a 10-day adventure race in the jungles of Fiji ... and still counting.

**See What You Can Do...** [PassItOn.com](https://passiton.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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