

## Reflections ... On the Edge of 70

February, 2011

It takes 25,500 days to get to 70. That's a whole bunch of sunrises and sunsets. And it doesn't include all those leap years. I'm looking down the road about 300 days ... and I'll be there.

There are plenty of milestones with birthdays, such as 50 & 60 for instance. But with 70 you're truly on the back nine. Or in running, it would be the last six miles of a marathon.

One thing is certain. There are fewer days ahead than there once were, which makes it easier to reflect on the past ... because it's safe. We're familiar with it, and we've done it. It's our history. Looking ahead after all these years is both sobering and guarded as we move closer to the edge of the Great Mystery.

I remind myself that these numbers are all relative. What's a 70? Or a 60? Or a 50? What's a race time, or a "PR"? They are all relative. Numbers fail to tell the whole story or the real truth. But we use them for assessment purposes. We are not a number ... any number. We are so much more than a test score, a race time, or a birthday.

A number of years ago I practiced a visualization model in order to run my best marathon. It worked because I included a form of relative realism in the recipe ... just being aware of your physical capacity boundaries.

So staring down the chute at a birthday number is really just another form of visualization. Numbers come and go; and we use them to magnify our history, such as December 7, 1941, or 9/11. These numbers are your reminders of significant events in our current history.

Running conjures up many numbers because we tend to focus on how many miles, or what pace, or our cumulative weekly, monthly, or lifetime mileage ... and of course, our race times and marathon times. But they don't tell the whole story, nor do they reveal the intrinsic "heart of the runner" ~ a term that seems to get less attention because it focuses on the non-measurable, such as the "spiritual heart." But just because you can't prove something scientifically doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

So the next 300 or so days will be anti-climactic. I'm already in my 70<sup>th</sup> orbit. So let's be realistic about the whole thing ... It is all relative. Now ... "Shoot the gun off."

And may the wind be always at your back.

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