

SIRIUS MUSINGS



Siri Lindley

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A world champion athlete herself and now one of the most revered triathlon coaches in the world, Siri enables athletes to become the champions and the people they were born to be. With an ability to see things in people they cannot see in themselves, Siri is driven by a unrivalled passion for triathlon and the people within.
<http://siri-lindley.com>

The great lessons of life and sport, learned through my dogs.

It's no secret, I love dogs. I will put aside the biggest, most obvious reasons, that they bring me so much love, joy and entertainment. My dogs have had the blessing of sharing this life with, truly filled my life with joy and have also contributed to the person I am today. My dogs have been my teachers, best friends, and loyal soulmates.

You may wonder how a dog influences who you are today. Well, they really do teach you lessons if you let them. By observing your own dog's loyalty, passion

for life, joyous spirit and never-ending excitement for life, you are inspired to take on some of that same energy, and live your own life in the same way.

I know for one, my love for this sport itself, began with my dog Whoopi. I fell in love with running through watching my dog Whoopi. When I started bringing her along on runs, I was absolutely touched by her excitement, joy, and complete exhilaration while exploring the trails, taking in the views, breathing in the fresh air and literally finding endless supplies of

energy, strength and endurance. Her joy in my announcing it's time to run and her anticipation leading to that moment, made me realise just how wonderful it is to be able to explore this world and this land, through running.

My passion for running, desire to feel free, find strength in solitude, and to soak up the serenity of running, is what inspired me to keep running faster - which ultimately led to my success as an athlete.

As a coach now, I not only remember the lessons I learned from my dogs, but I find myself "teaching" them to my athletes.



LESSON #1: Optimism

In 2010, I rescued a dog named Sophie. She was about 11 years old at the time, and had had a very hard life. I was so amazed by her eternal optimism. She would walk around as if any moment, a big huge juicy rib eye steak was going to fall from the sky, straight into her mouth. Even though it very rarely did get to her mouth (aside from me sneaking bits of my own steak under the table to her) she never ever lost that optimistic spirit. Her happy-go-lucky

character, the raw joy that she felt in seeing my face when I got home from work, when she went for a walk, or was given her dinner always emitted positive energy. Yes, she had had a hard life, but all she thought about then was how grateful she was to have a home, an owner who loves her, food everyday and doggie friends to share the home with. She never once thought about what she may not have had in the past. This gratitude that she showed was so refreshing, and inspiring.

As athletes, we need to know that things are not always going to go right. Times may get tough or downright painful. We need to stay strong, stay on the course, and stay positive. A tough start does **not** mean a horrible present and a tough finish - a tough start, can often lead to an amazing finish.

When I won the World Championships in 2001, I had the worst start ever - I exited the swim in nearly last place, with three packs driving the course ahead of me. Instead of wallowing in sadness over my failed attempt in the swim, I focused on just doing the best that I could in every single moment. I stayed positive and optimistically went about hunting those packs down. I soon caught one pack, then the next and finally ended up with the front pack. I then ran my way to the **win**.

Had I given up, I would never know the joy and complete exhilaration of a World Championship. My proverbial rib eye steak had fallen from the sky, straight into my mouth. Thank you Sophie for that optimistic spirit that you shared with me!

Focus on all the good in your life, instead of focusing on anything bad, or on what could go wrong. I guarantee you this will pay off.

LESSON #2: Trust

When I rescued Calvin in 2011, he had been badly abused. He was skittish and afraid, as a result of him being physically and emotionally hurt badly. I went to rescue him and tried right away to give him affection. He made it very clear to me that he was not ready to trust me yet. He obeyed all the rules and this showed me that he was grateful that I had given him a home and he respected me as his owner. But he was unwilling to give me anything more until he knew that I would never hurt him.

Each day, I would earn a bit more of his trust. He knew that when I woke, he would get a bathroom trip, receive his food, and

someone has "got your back", is trust. Trust isn't given away freely - it is earned.

When I take on an athlete, I am ready to give them my heart and soul as they have come to me and basically put their dream in my hands. I see this as a great honour. I then do everything in my power to help this athlete make their dreams come true. At first, this requires them to have some blind trust in me. Like Calvin, my athletes need to trust that I have their best interests at heart.

From there, the trust grows to where my athletes and I develop an amazing relationship. They understand that I truly want to give my heart and soul towards getting them to the level they need to be

"To be able to express yourself without fear of judgement and to know that someone has "got your back", is trust. Trust isn't given away freely - it is earned." — Siri Lindley

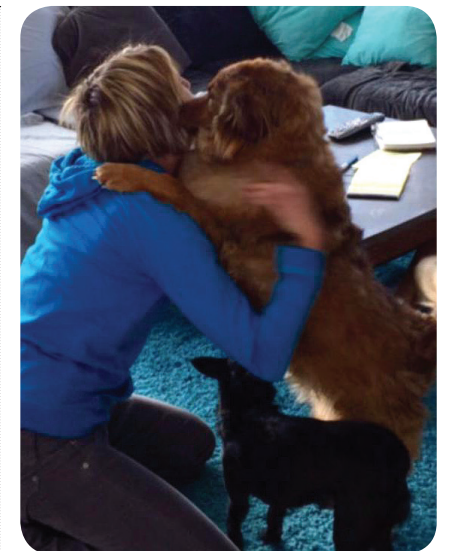
get a nice walk with a cold bowl of water at the end. Each day, I repeated this program, and each day I saw him enjoy it a little bit more. About a month later, while I was watching TV and he sat on the couch with me - not right beside me, but on the same couch. A few weeks later, he sat on the couch close enough for me to pat him. A few days later, I put my hand on his back and gave him a gentle pat. He didn't flinch or move away. The more time we shared, the more trust was built.

Now, Calvin never leaves my side. He lies beside me on the couch every single night with either his paws on my legs or his chin. He trusts me, and I trust him. This is the greatest feeling in the world, and after all the work and time it took, being able to have this wonderfully loving and affectionate dog, is the most wonderful reward.

To be able to express yourself without fear of judgement and to know that



COACH CALVIN: A key member of Team Sirius is with the squad every step of the way.



FUR BABIES: Siri and her dogs Sparky and Calvin play an important role in her life.

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at, in order to achieve their goals. With each passing day, we are better able to tap into all the greatness that lies within, and do everything that needs to be done to make dreams a reality. The trust strengthens us, and opens up even greater chances of success.

Having a coach greatly increases your chances of success – as long as that is a coach who has proven they know their stuff, and have the passion and knowledge to help you achieve your dreams. Once you take on a coach, you must commit to that relationship as you would any partnership. **Be all in.** Work together to make all your dreams come true. Trust in your coach and plan and make the magic happen.

When you make a commitment, you build hope. When you keep it, you build trust. Without trust, your progress towards the excellence you strive for will slow down. Trust in your partnerships, and you will achieve everything you dream of.

LESSON #3: Belief

Belief in yourself and in your dreams is the cornerstone towards achieving success.

When I was just starting triathlon, I was a mess. I couldn't swim, could barely bike, and only knew how to sprint up and down a lacrosse field to score a goal. I had no sense of endurance training but was filled

with passion to become the very best triathlete I was capable of becoming!

My dream was to one day be a world champion triathlete. Because of my limited background and skill in the sport, this dream was laughable to most. But, I **believed** that one day, I actually could achieve this! This belief fueled my every workout and thought.

Because I didn't have the benefit of a support crowd of believers to push me along, my belief in this dream had to be super powerful. Eventually, I improved and was able to convince a few very special people to believe in my dream as well – my mother and my first coach, Yoli. Both chose to believe in this "impossible dream" and truly got on board when they saw that nothing was going to stop me from doing everything in my power to become a world champion.

I know this is an article on dogs, but my cat Vinnie thinks he is a dog. So, I will honour his belief in himself and write about him as if he really truly was. Vinnie is fearless. He comes home with giant rabbits, snakes, mice and other glorious victories and

seems to delight in my utter disgust, and watching my partner Bek scrambling around with paper towels and a shovel, trying to save whatever is left of the victims.

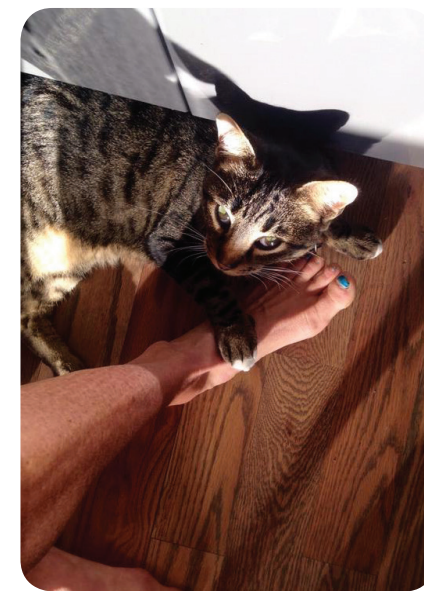
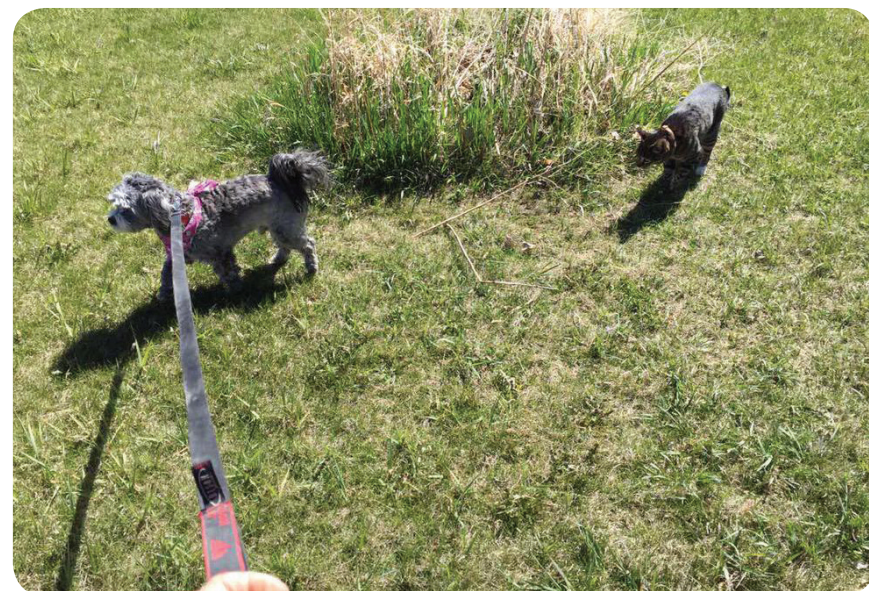
Due to Vinnie's belief in himself, he comes on every single walk we do with our dog, and no part of him questions whether or not he can complete the journey. I have seen big huskies chase after Vinnie, only to stop dead in their tracks as Vinnie's claws emerge and he lets out his warning meow. The dog's tails quickly get tucked between their legs and they take off the other way, defeated.

When Vinnie wants something, he goes after it and will not quit until he gets it. His confidence, relentless spirit and enthusiasm for life, truly inspires us all. Be all that you dream of being! Live your life with all the passion, enthusiasm, strength and relentlessness that it should be lived with.

Appreciation every opportunity you have, trust in your ability to achieve your dreams and believe in yourself. Executed authentically, these components will truly enable you to make magic happen in your life. 40

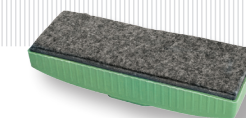
“When Vinnie wants something, he goes after it and will not quit until he gets it.”

— Siri Lindley



FREE TO BE WHO YOU ARE: Vinnie the cat taking a walks with the dogs and some TLC at home

SEXTON'S scribble...



Brendan Sexton

#TriSocial

As social media cements its place in our tech-heavy lives, **Brendan Sexton** takes us through the highs and lows of the livestream updates.

Ever scrolled through your Facebook friend statuses or Twitter feed and felt like you're wading through a digital monsoon of your friends' detailed weekend training sessions and various recovery methods? You keep your cursor on the scroll bar until you happen across the first post that is not photos of the most recent big hill to be summited on two wheels, down the empty lane of a non-descript swimming pool or some immaculate latte art taken from behind a pair of crossed, sweaty, lycra-clad legs sitting upon a milk crate of the most recently opened über trendy café. And when you do finally reach that completely non-triathlon related post – the post without the little yellow faces expressing the dramatic fatigue that the extremely detailed text couldn't quite convey – you read about Aunt Maureen's schnauzer who has just received her a brand new, freshly knitted cardigan and who, despite little "Schnooky's" expression, is absolutely "over the moon" about it. And you are too! You are brimming with joyful ebullience for the little wool-encased sausage purely because he isn't justifying his athleticism by shoving it in your face every other day over every electronic medium available!

But it's our life, isn't it? For what good are formats that are designed for folks to share their lives, interests and passions if they are frowned upon for being excited about their passions and doing just that? So often I've read the comment "Facebook is not your training diary" and though I imagine these comments are often pointed squarely at certain individuals they will often hold enough enmity to dissuade many others from keeping those of their social circle who are genuinely

interested in their endeavors unaware of their proudly achieved progressions.

I spend a lot of time on social media – too much really, I do admit – but in my position I am claiming some fraction of this time as "work." As a professional athlete in 2015, having an online presence can be almost as important as being able to win races. Presentation, attitude and professionalism are traits that may not just help a pro train and compete better, but are attributes sponsors may look for before race results or podium potential and thus lean towards funding an alliance with. And us pros are quickly realizing social media can be used to project ourselves as who we really are – our personality, character, beliefs, strengths and weaknesses. I am guilty of all charges of posting generic training, racing and recovery post to thousands of followers and friends... because it is me and I am proud of what I do and the work I put in. However I can't project me and my athletic life every minute of everyday – it would be me sitting at my laptop or tapping away at my phone [insert awkward face emoji here]. So balance is key as a triathlete/media socialite and some of us achieve that balance better than others.

Overall, I find the linking of triathlon and social media beneficial. Social media brings the triathlon world so much closer and shrinks it down into a much more accessible sphere.

Brendan Sexton

As a youngster, Brendan's life ambition was to be the fifth Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle. That didn't quite pan out. But triathlon did. A decade on, he's still at it. www.brendansexton.com.au @kung_fu_sexton

While typing this I am simultaneously following two ITU races and two long course events that are being run in three different continents across multiple social media platforms. I have access to text updates, photo, live video and live timing all at my fingertips. Then I can read, watch or listen to post race reactions of the pros and amateurs alike within minutes of them crossing the line. I will then be able to congratulate someone on their performance on the other side of the world that they will receive as soon as their hands are free from propping themselves up on their haunches mere metres beyond the finish line. In a sport that is still rapidly expanding around the globe, social media gives us the power to shape our own sport by having race locations, results, training techniques, nutrition and products constantly jammed in our faces by our friends and peers (as opposed to those with an invested interest who have the cash to influence us via marketing).

As far as I can work out, the world we create around us online is no different to that which we create in the real world. Social media is organic enough that what we're exposed to is shaped upon ourselves. Who we follow, who follows us, who our friends are, likes, and dislikes are all affected by the social media laws of motion. And I'll let you in on a little secret...if you're reading and enjoying an article written by a tri nerd like myself it is scientific fact that you yourself will attract a tri nerd of equal and opposing force online at any given moment. Unless, of course, this attraction's trajectory is thrown off course by an intervening puppy sweater! 41

