

## Personal Power over Pain

By Terri Norvell

A friend of mine recently shared with me that what makes Lance Armstrong a world renowned cyclist and multiple winner of the Tour de France is his ability to endure more pain than the average athlete. It's said that this European cycling race is like doing a marathon...20 days in a row. Perhaps winning over cancer is what gives Lance such a tolerance for discomfort and his incredible personal power.

Having never been "athletic" I didn't know that discomfort was part of the deal when I took up road biking this Spring. I certainly thought of Lance's perseverance on my 8<sup>th</sup> ride. I hadn't asked any questions about this trek over two Rocky Mountain passes. If I had realized that we were going to be riding for 70 miles, climbing a grinding 7340 vertical feet, never going below 7000 feet elevation...and that it would take us 9 hours...I might have reconsidered my acceptance of this outing. Really, one mountain would have been plenty! Our actual riding time was 7 hours with a cumulative 2 hours of rest stops. On many of those breaks my friend had to actually help me off my bike because my legs were so fatigued. I knew quitting wasn't an option, yet I didn't know how I was going to make it. That's when I realized that all of my personal power beliefs were going to be put to a test. I had to practice what I preach (so to speak).

I knew that using my mind was the solution to my current exhaustive situation. It was time to start focusing on something empowering rather than disempowering. So I started saying, "With every pedal stroke my legs and knees are getting stronger and stronger, my shoulders and back are relaxed, the wind is my friend," etc. To that I added my 2003 personal power talk affirmations over and over in my mind. Then I began creating some new affirmations about what I wanted in my life (I had plenty of time for planning!) Did the discomfort or pain go away? Not really. But, I was able to persevere up those mountains.

The true test came as we approached the top of Berthoud Pass when I saw a sign that said 1 mile to the top. Tears of dizziness flooded my eyes. I didn't think I could make another foot let alone a mile. But I knew the remaining 15 miles would be down hill. Focusing on the positive...I made it! Oh yes, there is one more technique I called upon that day. My friend asked me a most unusual question, "Did I have a spiritual experience on the mountains?" To which I replied, "That depends if you count when I visualized Angels pushing me uphill!"

Personal power over pain? Yes! Whether an athletic quest or a business challenge, what's important to know is that we have abilities within us to achieve whatever we set our sights on. Through engaging the power of our minds **anything is possible**. Is there a situation in your life right now that can be made easier by focusing on what you want, what rather than the discomfort? Whatever it is...go for it!

PS. Next ride...the Triple Bypass...a 120 mile ride over three mountain passes from Evergreen to Avon, Colorado. Here's to reaching yet another level of personal power!