

# CANADIAN PHYSIQUE ALLIANCE

**MAY 2 - 8  
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
WEEK**

REPORT FROM  
**PRESIDENT**  
*Ron Flache*



**MAY/JUNE 2022**

**INSPIRATIONAL  
JOURNEYS**

**2022 CONTEST  
SCHEDULE**



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# SPIRITUALITY REALIZED

By Pr. Steven Tunks

My physical & mental health journey led me to my spiritual one that slowly took me to a path to become an ordained pastor. Now how did that happen?! Where did it all begin?

As with many of us, I have been struggling with being overweight for many years. I have always been known as that “husky” kid in grade school. I did lose some baby fat in high school but deep in my mind, very envious of those around me that were fit and had chiseled bodies. During most of my adult years I would get frustrated at my weight always increasing and trying those fad quick weight-loss diets like “tomato soup diet”, “calorie counting”, “weight loss pills” and even the “Atkins diet”. After starting and stopping about a dozen times at my highest weight of 367lbs - on June 13th, 2015 - I made a birthday promise to myself; to finally finish what I started and not take the easy way out like I have for many years of my adult life. I set a goal that on March 18th, 2017 would be the date where I would step foot in my first OPA fitness competition, where I won second place.

On June 1st, 2018 I competed in the IPPB Pro Qualifier in Toronto and came in 3rd place. I am a dedicated true believer that actions are more powerful than just words. At this time I was working extremely hard off season to go back June 1st 2019 to obtain my Pro Card.

I was a once a step parent in the audience, watching and dreaming of standing proud like other men my age on stage. I've envisioned my future, right then and there, that I will win my own one day; little did I realize where it would really take me.

On March 18th, 2017 was the day I competed in my 1st competition. There was an article published in the May 2017 Around the OPA where I shared my path to a better life.

A few years later, COVID hit! Turning the world around and changed all of our lives drastically in one way or another. It was the uncertainty of what's going to happen in our lives, while going through a recent breakup and solitude that lit up that fire in me once again. At first, it was trying to keep healthy and away from being sick and caught by COVID, then it gradually turned to a mental and physical dedication and discipline to do better for myself. I wanted more for myself on a personal

level and from life. It was a struggle of pain. Pain of being alone, pain of emotional setbacks, personal struggles and for many of us it was an end of a chapter of our lives before COVID. There was also the pain of constant worrying about loved ones and their health conditions, not to mention, the physical pain of working out every day, 3 hours in the harsh cold, rain and snow to keep my mental health, physical and psychological health in check. It was through pain I felt I was being redeemed for my shortcomings in life as a human being. It was a time of solitude and reflection. I knew that I couldn't control life around me, but I knew I can control what I can do for myself. It was a mental and physical dedication to stay healthy and active as much I can for my mind, body and soul.

I switched and pivoted my thoughts of how to become the best version of myself and being the best shape of my life. There was a burning drive and quest to get ready for war; getting in the best shape of my



life was now my purpose. It was very simple, after 3 months of not going to the gym and suffering what I thought was a setback on the military routine and structure I created in the first chapter of my mind body transformation. It was when I put on my headphones and learned to disconnect and using my water bottle as a tool to get fit. I use the technique of walking fast and squeezing the water bottle for resistance and gained not just lean muscle, but working out a way that was much easier than before. It turned to throwing from one hand to another using the weight of the water to get the same effect

of using an elliptical machine in the gym. I used the jungle gym and monkey bars in the local park as my training ground. I learned to use my spirituality of meditation controlling my breathing and then my heart rate. I learned to close my eyes during these techniques to train my mind to learn in a way that my calisthenics based routines were working.

It also slowly became a spiritual awakening with lots of time to reflect on the past and wonder how I reached to this point in my present, all alone. At first it was a struggle to accept that partially was because of my short comings as a person but mostly to me. I was settling for situations that were less than what I knew deep inside I deserved. I deserved more, I deserved to be seen, heard and loved. I needed to do that for myself first before I expected that from anyone else. It was that journey that led me to more. I knew I was facing hard realities that no one is coming to save me, but me! Along with me, was my faith and hope I have within, that God within. I wanted to be a better human being, someone I could be proud of, someone I loved looking at the mirror, someone I felt good about!

That wasn't a simple task but an easy task because redemption towards your God is only one step away. It is our mental block and hopelessness that stops us. It is that doubt, anger and hate that cripples us. God's love and forgiveness is always awaiting us, we just need to take the first step, the very smallest step. With time I also knew it also meant righting my wrongs and that was a slow and painful path to redemption. It is the faith and hope that the 'light at the end of the tunnel' is real, it's that continuous step even if it meant 'crawling on your knees' step, it's the 'never giving up' step. It's the let's 'rest but Never Give Up' step. It is that hardest step that requires you to do better to accomplish better and reach your best possible potential of yourself. It is that Mental Block that I had to overcome, that it IS possible and Yes the Husky Kid Can do THIS! It was fighting all the doubt, rejection, failures and mental discouragement that I had to fight more so than the physical fight. Yes, it was a fight! Fight for life, fight for more, fight for love, fight for wanting more for myself and what I knew I deserved deep down inside my child self. I wanted to be seen, heard and recognized for my uniqueness, in my heart and soul. It is there and I deserved it! As humans we are all sinners, but no matter how big and deep the sin, you can still do it! I know the struggle; sacrifice and dedication that's put in becoming an athlete and it can be a very, very lonely road. I'm here to tell you that you are NOT alone and you can become the

best version of yourself!

That path led me to finish what I started. On Dec 4th, 2021, I won Gold on the nationals pro qualifier for masters men's physique at 52. I thought my path and journey was redeeming myself from not giving it 100% at the Pro Qualifier. But the path through redemption; mental health, physical health, addictions, had earned me my second chance in life instead it was wanting more for myself that I got more. On Feb 19th, 2022 I was ordained as a Pastor which as it turned out to be my true gold! It was that path that made me feel I had reached my truest potential which is planting seeds of hope in others and inspiring everyone to do better and love themselves in the process.

My final message here is your physical, mental and spiritual work you put in is yours; nobody can take that from you. Nobody can discredit, remove it from you or cheat you. You have accomplished what many will never do and that is your True Gold. Sharing my transformation I hope can inspire someone by planting a seed. No one can make you change; only YOU can. Only you will make that final commitment to yourself and to loved ones that will change your life for all the right reasons. I will also say this, for anyone that wants to take the first step - I am a phone call away to go to the gym with you for the 1st time - to walk and then run towards your transformation; to the better YOU! #ResultsProven #BlueEyedDragon #TruthLiveIt



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