

## **Consulting as a Creative, Cooperative Process: A Case Study by a Triathlete and her Consultant**

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### **Abstract**

In this article, we, Karine and Eric, share our consultant-athlete relationship with you. We worked together in the summer of 2003 in preparation for Karine's Ironman triathlon competition in Wisconsin, where she hoped to qualify for the World Championships in Hawaii. Since we were both master's students in sport psychology at the time, we felt it was a unique opportunity to reflect together on the consultation and learning process. We hope you can experience both what it is like to consult and what it is like to be on the receiving/performance side of things. In this article Eric presents his point of view as a beginning consultant, and Karine shares her experiences as an athlete which includes her post-race Ironman report to see how things ended up. We expect that you will find our comments (and the little mistakes we made) amusing but very educational, as our comments in this article were written separately and without consultation this time!

Imagine that you are beginning as a sport psychology consultant, and you receive the following email from the first triathlete you have ever worked with, right after an important qualifying race. How would you react to this challenging email? How would you deal with the accompanying feelings?

*Want to know how it went at Muskoka? I qualified for Wisconsin! So I am very happy about that.*

*However, something very special happened to me for the first, and hopefully last time: I just DID NOT WANT TO RUN. When I got off the bike, everything was going excellent, I was so happy with my swim, and on the bike I had passed two girls in my age category. I had eaten*

*and drank enough, and I was looking forward to run, but when I actually started to run, BANG!*

*I kind of blew out, I don't know, I did not want to run at all. I had a knot in my throat, I was in tears, I was walking and really, really, really did not want to start running. I had to use every imaginable psychological tip I knew of only to run for a couple of minutes and then stop again. I walked at the top of hills, at the bottom of hills, at aid stations, and at many other times whenever a good excuse crossed my mind. I let two or three girls in my age category pass me without a blink. For one of them, who was running right behind me, I stopped running, and looked at her saying: go ahead! Unbelievable.*

*I hated the running part so much that when I finally got to the finish line, I started crying. There the camera zoomed in on me, and the interviewer said: "It's a lot of emotion, isn't it?" [...] What a horrible experience.*

*[June 17, 2003]*

## **Eric – The Consultant Side**

There were two basic reasons why I wanted to work with Karine during her journey. First, it simulated very closely what it would be like for me to work with a high-level athlete who already knew a lot about sport psychology. Second, and she didn't know this at the time, I asked her because after hearing her discuss her training in class, I felt that I could help her enjoy her sport more. Enjoyment soon became the central theme of the consultations from my perspective.

I want to discuss how the process felt for me. I want to capture in my own words how

it felt to consult as well as to describe how I knew, or at least believed, that I was being helpful and effective.

In the beginning, I was nervous; I didn't know if I would be able to help her. I wasn't sure what I had to offer, but it turned out that I felt pretty comfortable right from the start in the actual sessions. It certainly helped that Karine was very proactive during the process. She almost always had something she wanted to discuss or tell me, even before I asked her how she was doing. She would often start by saying something like:

*"the funny thing is, the more confident I am that I will do well, and the more pleasure I get while competing, the less "proud" I seem to feel afterwards... it seems like before when it was so hard, and stressful, that the relief/pride was higher at the end... something I should think about. Or maybe the distance-related challenge was not that big, since I had covered the distance in training, and I didn't have a time-related challenge since it was the first time on a new course... I don't know. Let's talk about it some time!"*

*[July 28, 2003]*

Also, I remember in our first meetings being afraid to offer things that she may not appreciate or find useful. The reality is, she didn't like all the ideas or suggestions I had. I certainly tried to give her choice between different things when possible. I now know that it is probably unreasonable to expect your client to like every idea you have for them. I also learned that having an athlete not like some of your ideas is a normal part of the experience, especially in the beginning years. I actually believe that those discussions help to establish trust between the consultant and the athlete. From my point of

view, it clearly reflects to the athlete my belief that I am not an expert in *their* performance. In addition, the cooperative character of the relationship gives the athlete a chance to assert responsibility about her own performance as well as about the direction of the consultation process.

*"As for your focus/enjoyment thing, I haven't actually wrote it down in my agenda after my sessions, but it often pops up in my head DURING training, and it is a superb reminder that it is most important that I enjoy what I do, and I found it helps."*

[July 4, 2003]

One of the first things I noticed was how different each session felt. There were a couple of sessions where it seemed as if I did all the talking. There were others where I felt as if I only said a few words. If I had to guess the sessions that were most effective, I would say that they were those when we shared equally. As well, sometimes it felt as if I was teaching, and other times my role was just to listen. I believe that I was most effective when there was an equal balance between the two.

We always decided to meet at least a few days before any race or event. I certainly felt more comfortable meeting a few days before as opposed to the day just before a race. Knowing that there were a couple of days for her to reflect gave me the confidence to try different things or suggest ideas for her to consider. If we had met too close to a performance, I might have held back for fear of causing Karine to be anxious instead of improving her performance. However, I could have easily been contacted through email or phone if there were any 'emergency' concerns right before an event.

From my perspective, I always felt a very high level of comfort when talking with

Karine. I can't recall one moment where I felt uncomfortable discussing a particular topic. There were moments when I was unsure of how effective I was being, but this was not related to a lack of good communication. As well there were times when I wasn't sure how open to be about a subject. I sometimes wondered how much of my personal feelings about her performances I should share with her. I wasn't always sure where the line between being proactive and imposing was when working with an athlete. I remember being a little worried and anxious about discussing confidence issues with her. What if I unknowingly was making her feel less confident by bringing up the subject? I felt the best approach to take was to ask questions in a way that made her feel more confident about her sport. For example, "Karine could you tell me the three things your coach would say you improved the most in this summer?" Plus, I always tried to focus the conversation on when and how she could feel more confident.

*"Thanks again for everything, I now appreciate talking to you about what I feel, I am slowly becoming more at ease... It's never easy to reveal personal weaknesses..."*

[June 26, 2003]

In the end, one of the best parts of the consulting process for me was listening to her stories because she was very skillful in the art of self-reflection.

*"I also recently discovered (as I think I touched upon in my last email) that I work better if I have a precise idea of the workout I have to do, the distance I have to cover. My training schedule works by time (eg. 2h15 running) and not by distance. But when I know in advance up to where I will go, it is like a challenge and I have to be focused to attain it, whereas if I just bike here and there with no pre-*

*cise course in mind, I tend to slack off... I was wondering if that was what Csik-szentmihalyi was referring to for his junction of challenge and skills, of precise goals and feedback. Anyways, now I try to cover as much distance as I can, instead of focusing on the time I have to do. Isn't that what distance training is anyway?*

*I also noticed that I like to know the course a little bit, it is encouraging to pass this house, and to climb this hill and knowing that after there is a nice little stretch, etc. I guess that's what the visualization of the race course is for... I will prepare accordingly for Wisconsin."*

*[July 4, 2003]*

I think as a beginning consultant you learn as much (or more) from the athletes you work with as they do from you. Each athlete has an individual way of dealing with and seeing their sport and life. As a consultant you have a chance, even if only for a short time, to be part of that world. I often talked to Karine for over two hours at a time. I have to admit that I found the process exhausting. I don't think anything can really prepare you for how much energy it takes to consult, especially if you really try to do it well. It might have been better to shorten the sessions, but there always seemed to be something that was worth discussing. Usually, after we talked, Karine headed for a few hours of training. I personally didn't have any energy left afterwards to do much of anything but rest. I do remember that at the end of each session, I really had a sense of wanting Karine to do well. During each consulting session I tried to give my best, and when it was over I could only hope I did enough.



Before hearing what Karine has to say, here is what Eric wrote, in his Journal, after their meeting following the Muskoka qualifying race...

*This was the first meeting after Karine qualified for Wisconsin Ironman. It followed a tough race in Muskoka. From what she told me, she basically blew up on the run or at least in the transition zone and at the beginning. It turns out she actually ran pretty fast. I basically intended to listen to her tell her story.*

*She is really excited to talk. We only talk once every 3 weeks or so, so there is usually a lot to talk about. Its always fun. The one thing that is very different when I talk to Karine is that I know she knows almost as much as me. She knows all about pre-comp plans, visualization... etc. I find I have to be really original and also try to see what she might not be seeing. Sometimes it takes two to see one. I also find that it is more like a creative, cooperative process than me being in charge. I really enjoy it.*

*In terms of today's topic. I brought in a time sheet of the top five competitors. So we talked about how she felt she did. The main focus was how does she know how hard or fast to run/swim/bike. When I asked her, she didn't really know. I also asked her if running fast has to feel hard. I think she sees the best result as something that has to be painful. I tried to suggest that a person can run fast and it could still feel easy. Easy speed. I don't think she really agreed. I actually said that feeling hard and running fast might be cousins but they're not married. I was trying to make her laugh and see the difference. I also brought up, how some things can be very subjective. Like how heavy something feels?*

*We also talked a lot about why she was afraid not to qualify (in her words). She talked a little about looking silly or bad if she didn't run faster than the others girls in her club. I brought up the fact that Lance Armstrong only trains to win the Tour de France. He doesn't care if he wins all the other smaller races because he knows he is training to peak for the big race. She relaxed a bit.*

*In terms of how effective I was? Well it is a very creative process. I bring up all sorts of odd points, facts, and funny stories. I admit she likes some of them better than others. We joked about TRANSITIONS ZONES IN LIFE. She is always training and can't really get away from triathlons. I told her about Terry's [Orlick] new CD and she really wanted to borrow it. I am not really sure where we are headed or where I think we should go. I think added value and enjoyment might be an interesting topic.*

*Lesson Learned- Enjoyment is a key part to the consulting process; it's a sign things are going well*

## **Karine – The Athlete Side**

### **How did it feel to be consulted?**

I must say that at the beginning, I was rather uncomfortable talking about my intimate thoughts and feelings. It was not easy to admit, for instance, that fearing that others may judge my performance was a sensitive issue for me. At one point, I decided to share this concern with Eric, who was pretty surprised! I think that when working with athletes new to sport psychology consulting, one must be understanding of an athlete's low comfort level at first.

One aspect of Eric's consulting that I liked particularly was that throughout the summer, he insisted repeatedly on specific ideas

that were important to him. He stayed true to his philosophy during the entire journey, and it comforted me to encounter consistent reactions. As an example, according to Eric, breathing can be very helpful in many situations where it can relax us and encourage us to take our time before trying to solve a problem. Instead of coming up with a new strategy each time we talked about something that had happened to me, Eric just asked me: "Did you remember to breathe?" To be reminded that the best way to deal with a hard situation is to first take a big breath, kind of reassured me because I knew I could do it.

### **How did the consultant help?**

I think it is essential for the athlete to stay open to the consultant's ideas and suggestions. Sometimes, at the outset I wasn't sure Eric's suggestions would lead me very far. But I kept thinking about our discussion after the meeting, and most of the time it produced good results. Often, someone outside of our own situation can see things in a different manner than we do, and this new perspective can generate a creative and accurate improvement strategy. The athlete should strive to be willing to try something before discarding it as ineffective.

*I just wanted to write to you about a major shift in perspective that I'm currently in the process of experiencing... You know that even if I don't seem to buy into what you tell me right away, I always think about it again and again. Because I sincerely believe that you have some kind of wisdom... where do you get it from?*

*In any event, I am slowly changing my vision of "It's gonna be hard" to "I will go fast". Because I really like to go fast, bike fast, run fast, pass people, feel the speed... that's what I train for in fact!*

*"Easy speed"... I am now beginning to understand it not only in theory but in the sometimes harsh reality of physical discomfort..."*

*[June 26, 2003]*

### **How did you know the consulting process and strategies were effective?**

You must try to believe! When I noticed that I was less anxious before a competition, when I saw that I could enjoy every training session, when I became aware of my best training and competing focus, and especially when I discovered that I could keep this best focus for the time I needed and consequently have a great race, I couldn't help but be convinced that sport psychology is indeed very effective!

On this point, I will add that I consider it absolutely important that the athlete have trust and confidence in his or her consultant. In order for the consulting process to be as effective as possible, the athlete must feel that the consultant really has the potential to provide help. To achieve this, beginning consultants should prepare well and strive to project confidence from the outset in their capacities and their ideas. It is vital that they avoid expressing doubts on the efficiency of a tip or strategy before the athlete even tries to implement it. It is certainly a challenge to be and appear very confident all the time, but the consultant can influence the athlete's perception of his or her proficiency by talking in a positive and supportive manner, for instance. In summary, to follow Professor Orlick's advice to 'Act as if you can' !

### **Did the consultant prove cooperative?**

Yes! Eric was always very open to my agenda, and he would accommodate my schedule whenever he could. He was also on time and mentally ready to meet, and he made me feel that his work with me was im-

portant, which I think is crucial for developing a trusting relationship with the athlete. Moreover, Eric was always willing to lend me tapes, books and other material that could help me, and he was interested by all aspects of my training.

### **What was working well?**

Eric showed great consulting qualities, like patience, creativity and positiveness. Patience, because it sometimes took me a long time before trying, not to say integrating, a new skill in my routine. Eric respected my rhythm and my priorities. But when something wasn't working very well, he didn't hesitate to suggest new ideas which were often very special and imaginative. Lastly, being positive is surely, in my opinion, the most important quality a consultant can demonstrate. After every single meeting with Eric, I felt excellent! A positive consultant can increase the athlete's confidence immensely just by using a positive outlook and a positive language.

I also liked when Eric provided me with materials. In my view they served two major purposes. First, they were a concrete way to witness my progress. Also, the papers, graphs, pictures, key words, etc. served as useful reminders of the strategies we were practicing.

Finally, I was especially thankful for Eric's speed in responding to my questions. My emails were answered in a very timely fashion, and this was something I appreciated a lot. We athletes always want a quick fix!

### **Less effective parts**

At one point during the summer, I competed in a race that served as a qualifier for the next one in my competition plan. When he saw the results, Eric thought (mistakenly in fact) that I hadn't qualified. He felt uncom-

fortable with this situation, and didn't know what to say. Because of that, he didn't email me after the race as he usually did. I felt very disappointed not to hear from him and not to be able to talk about what happened. It is possible that after a bad performance, some athletes may want some time before discussing the experience in detail, which the consultant should respect. However, feelings cannot be guessed, and after poorer performances, the continued care and interest the consultant shows can only do good to the athlete. Moreover, bad performances can happen to anyone, and I think it is a good idea to be prepared for this type of situation. It is a great opportunity to focus on the lessons learned, and to remind the athlete that overcoming obstacles is part of every meaningful journey.

[Actually, after we talked about this upon writing the article together, Eric told me that my interpretation of his not emailing me was not correct. In fact, he had assumed that I would be the one who would make the first contact after the competition, as he also preferred to talk in person rather than through the Internet. It would have been useful if this had been decided in advance. ]

One other thing that was not useful was the scientific articles Eric handed to me. Even if I consider myself well educated and keen on learning about sport psychology in general, I just didn't have the time and interest to read them. In my mind, I was working with Eric with the view that HE would figure out that literature and then pass on the relevant, practical parts to me. And the problem was, not having done the readings made me feel guilty at the next meeting.

### **Best parts**

I **loved** when Eric asked me to talk about the training sessions and races I competed in. For one, it is a good way to open up the

conversation and enter the subject. It is so pleasant for athletes just to have someone interested in hearing all the little details that are of crucial importance to us! Training and competing takes up a huge part of the athlete's life, and talking with the consultant is a nice opportunity to verbalize about what's going on. Moreover, telling our story out loud often reveals a powerful tool for self-awareness. A personal analysis usually takes place without a need for the consultant to bring the issues up. A consultant can advise the athlete that they will inquire about how a particular event went, and the athlete will look forward to discussing it in the next consulting session even more!

Similarly, I **really appreciated** it when Eric came to see one of my races. I felt excited to show him many of the things we had talked about, and proud that he came to see me in action! Consultants should always try to go to their athletes' venue, not only to get a more in-depth knowledge of the particular sport environment, but to show their genuine interest and support toward their athletes.

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### **Karine – The Ironman Performance**

Obviously, the culminating point of our experience was when Karine actually completed the Ironman competition that we had both been focusing on during the lead-up time in the summer. She successfully finished in a little over 12 hours and was 4<sup>th</sup> in her age-group. Here is her post-race report, written a few days after the race:

#### **WHAT AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE!**

*The Ironman went very well. I did not complete it under 12 hours, as I was expecting, but in light of the conditions, my finishing time of 12h12 is very satisfying. It was so hot and humid (around 32 to*

*34°C / 90-94 f) that many participants had to drop out, including pros. It was really hard to eat, not to mention to stay hydrated, because the heat made us nauseous. I also had stomach problems on the bike (like almost everybody else) which added to the difficulty of drinking and eating. Because of that, the time and run splits were longer than expected. I am satisfied with the fact that I did all I could, so I am very proud of my accomplishment!*

*I finished fourth in my age category, and I had to place second to qualify for Hawaii. I am not too disappointed though, because I am not even sure whether I would have liked to do it... An Ironman is soooooo much harder than we can imagine if we don't actually do it... Even I slightly underestimated the challenge, and I had trained hard this summer and was really well prepared. I still don't understand how the pros can call that their jobs... I will be glad enough to go to Hawaii only to try to figure that out!*

### **Chronological account**

*I woke up at 3:30 a.m. and had breakfast, even though I wasn't hungry. I felt nervous, but it was more like a good excitement that it was finally the big day. I arrived in the transition zone around 5:00 a.m., to do the last preparation on my bike. There, it was still dark, the morning was calm and quiet, but the people were all nervous... They were playing smooth songs like Enya, and the commentator was instructing us on not to forget to do this and that, etc. I had a couple of tears, because it was so intense... I managed to keep calm, but I was still anticipating a huge day. All my gear was ready, I was there in advance, so I had the time to put on sunscreen,*

*and things like that in a quiet place, near the bathroom. I was happy to finally be there and all ready, but a little bit sad at the same time that the journey was about to be over...*

*The sun had not rose yet and it was time for me to get near the water. (The transition zone, where all the bikes were, was at the top of a big building) I was feeling anxious. Not overly so, but I could tell my body was preparing for the challenge to come. There were approximately 1,800 people at the start, so it's pretty impressive to be among all of them... Even our supporters were crying... It's something to see. I was happy to find my boyfriend, so we kissed good luck.*

*As soon as I entered the water, my anxiety stopped. I was feeling very good in the lake, like a known territory, my body moving well through the small waves. I did a quick warm-up swim and took the time to chat with other triathletes and admire the mass of spectators gathered to cheer for us. It was so impressive! I felt very blessed to be happy and to be part of an extraordinary adventure like that! So many folks in the water at the same time, and it was wonderful with the sun still pink behind us...*

*I waited patiently for the cannon to give the starting signal, but after!!! Oh my God! It was my first mass start, and I must admit that I didn't think it was so hectic. I had to battle for close to 3 km (out of 3.8km...). I was kicked in the face, my lip was cut, people were grasping me and passing OVER me! I could barely swim, I was just trying to breathe at the right moment. I didn't panic though, because I knew it would happen, it was just worse than expected.*

*I focused on drafting the fastest swimmers I could follow, and I finished my swim in 1h07! This was an accomplishment in itself, since I was officially aiming between 1h15 and 1h20, and 1h12 in my heart. At least that's the positive aspect of having hundreds of people creating waves around you!*

*I had a pretty good transition, and I was off onto my bike. The course was splendid, in the countryside. Right from the beginning, however, I experienced cramps, which slowed me down a little. Also, in order not to get a drafting penalty, I had to slow down each time I was passed... And this was often, because there are a lot of strong guys that do not swim very fast but pass everybody on the bike. Because of the heat, I really really had to make a big effort to eat, and I wanted to throw up with each mouthful. I drank only water for a little while, and then resumed on Gatorade when my stomach was settled (because I know that drinking water only can lead to hyponatremia). I was a little discouraged when I saw that I wasn't going to have a fast bike split (from my odometer), but told myself that everybody was facing the same conditions.*

I just continued and continued biking, keeping a focus on having a high cadence and saving my legs for the run. I had a good bike leg mentally, I was in the moment and focused, until maybe the 160-km mark. After that, until 180km, I was pretty fed up with cycling, I just wanted to arrive. I was tired, hot, humid, nauseous... So after 6h38, I finally entered the transition zone for the second time.

Here again, pretty good. After a quick stop at the bathroom, I was heading out for the marathon. A flash in my head: "I

still have to run an entire marathon, darn!" I had to quickly change that thought, or I would have called it a day right there.

This summer, I had worked a lot on my mental preparation for the run. Running is always the hardest part, because it is the hardest sport on the body, and it is at the end of the competition and you're already tired, not to say dead in the case of an Ironman. So Eric helped me a lot to find my best running focus, and I practiced it a lot in training, so I was ready. I therefore just let my body run, and run, and run... I walked the aid stations (it was a mental break so... refreshing...) at the beginning, and walked the up hills in the middle section, and towards the end I added walking everywhere there was a so-called reason to do so (eg. "this turn is too sharp" (yeah right...)). Anyway, in between I had a very good pace, and I was soooooooooo thankful to have done the necessary training!!! It was a two-loop course, and it is somewhat discouraging to be so near the finish line and still have a half-marathon to run... but I just didn't think too much, and let myself run and run and run. I saw my boyfriend twice on the course, I was glad to see he was doing ok.

I finally arrived at the finish line and was very happy. I had however anticipated that I would be ecstatic and I would cry, but no. I don't think I was actually happier than finishing any other triathlon I did. I just felt as if I had let my body do what it had to do that day. But I did it well, and I am feeling good about that!!!

## The Aftermath

*I knew I was dehydrated right from the beginning of the run. I was light-headed and dizzy, and eventually felt nauseous and sometimes had a little difficulty breathing. This summer, with the help of Eric, I learned to acknowledge the pain and suffering and to let it go. That's exactly what I did, I didn't care about not feeling well (it wasn't that bad during the run though) and just ran. I even managed to get the fastest run split (marathon) of my age group! I ran only 12 minutes slower than my boyfriend (who finished in 10h41), in the top 10% of all participants!!!*

*But thanks to Eric's great consulting skills (hahaha), I ended up at the hospital! After I crossed the finish line, I started feeling very weak and more nauseous than usual. Volunteers brought me in the medical tent, where they weighed me (they also had our pre-competition weight) and checked me quickly. I was not feeling great at that point.*

*Around 10 p.m., they told me I better go to the hospital, because they couldn't do much more for me, since I was vomiting everything I was trying to take in. The ambulance brought me to the closest hospital, where doctors and nurses were both competent and very attentive. At the hospital, I received more IV's and sodium. X-Rays showed I had some liquid in the lungs, and thus my blood oxygen rate was very low (~60% as opposed to >92%). Fortunately, my boyfriend was there to comfort me the whole time.*

*By around 8 a.m., I was already feeling much better. I was obviously very tired, but otherwise I was fine. They did blood tests to be sure, and they let me check out at 1 p.m. Hey, the food is good in private hospitals! And the nurses and*

*doctors are all so nice and attentive, the difference is striking.*

*Even if I had qualified for Hawaii, my boyfriend said he would have let me choose between him and doing Hawaiï, he had had enough. We have to admit that it's pushing the limits a little... Anyway, I am more than OK now, ready to go again! Curiously, I am not very sore (I was so well-trained) and I would be able theoretically to do another Ironman soon, whereas my boyfriend and our friends can't even hear the word. Especially during the run portion, they concentrated so much on their pain and discomfort that they had thoughts like, I'll be so happy when I'm done, if I can just finish this stupid thing... This obviously made them sick, whereas I enjoyed just letting my body swim, bike and run... That's what the mental side of sport is about, isn't it?*

*For my thesis I am looking forward to interview all those Ironman pros to understand how it is they are so good at it and love it so much... because it's seriously hard!!!*

*Thanks so much to our sport psychology grad class 2003 for all your support, I thought about the cake for the whole bike section, and it gave me wings (or legs)! I hope to see you soon, and wish you the best in all your new adventures. Live fully !*

Karine

## Summary

**Eric**

I was rather new in the consulting world when I started working with Karine. I knew I was probably going to make some mistakes, though I wasn't sure what they would be. It's amazing how the little things can be really important. I learned that you really need to decide in advance how to contact each other and how to decide when to meet after an event. You can never really know what an athlete is thinking unless you ask. I also learned that you should never underestimate how busy an athlete is, and must realize that if they choose to meet with you, this is a sign that you're doing something well.

In terms of the outcome of the consultation, it can only really be seen on race day. I knew it would be pretty tough to qualify for Hawaii, but I think I still expected to her to. When she didn't, I was disappointed for her. However, after I heard what actually happened during the race, I was excited and really amazed at how tough she was that day. I think in the end, what occurred was that she helped me and I helped her "get better faster". You can't know Karine without believing that she will accomplish the things she wants to do. I think she would tell you it's all in the details. If you want to get better you've got to prepare as well as you can. I think that is true of consulting too, you have to be prepared to be at your best.

For me, it really is a creative, cooperative process. You start somewhere together and where you end up depends on how well you work together.

**Karine**

For me too, the experience was totally awesome! This summer, I learned more about myself than I did in the last five years. Most importantly, thanks to Eric, I love triathlon more than ever before. I appreciate my body

working well and hard, as well as the different environmental conditions I train and race in. Moreover, my pre-race stress level has diminished incredibly, and this contributes to me feeling so good doing triathlon. I had the chance, this summer, to experience first hand the difference a good sport psychology consultant can make in an athlete's life. We have the opportunity to help our athletes feel so much better, and in the same process, perform better. It is up to us to be very attentive to their individual needs and desires so that we can work together to go where their dreams will carry them!