



# ***BODY IMAGE AND MODERN SOCIETY THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS!***

By: Troy Saunders

## **How did anorexia take Krista Phelps?**

Krista Phelps (Steve Pope Photography), 16, of Kingsley had undergone treatment for anorexia nervosa. Her parents sought help for the goal-driven perfectionist, enlisting the aid of doctors, counselors, teachers and coaches. But in the end, it wasn't enough to save the young athlete. [CLICK HERE FOR THE ORIGINAL DesMoines REGISTER ARTICLE](#) By: John Naughton



The above linked article is about a young lady from my home town, Krista Phelps. The Phelps Family is a wonderful family, and it is extremely unfortunate for this to have happened. As someone who has been involved in fitness, since before high school, I understand the pull to be your best physically and to emulate our inspirations. However the saturation of extreme images was far less when I was her age. With the Big 3 broadcast networks plus PBS as my only sources for what was viewed as elite physiques . I simply did not have the same exposure to the extreme looks that did exist even then. My major motivation came from reading and only what my imagination could conceive what physical excellence was. Anyone who knew me back then would tell you I was dreamer with more than the average obsession for weight training, but I had no concept of what dangerous extremes the human body could be pushed to.

I wish I could have been able to impact Krista's desire to be the elite person she so wanted to be. There is so much to learn and understand on what takes to be a top athlete, and especially to achieve the look of bodybuilders, fitness and figure competitors little alone movie icons and other superstars we idolize in society. The least of which is high dollar personal trainers and professional cooks often employed. Even less discussed is the risk and consequence of choosing to use performance enhancing drugs and/or plastic surgery that has become so prevalent in modern society to achieve the ultimate in sculpted physiques. While not always the case, the physiques we most often see and worship are not even humanly possible.....without these extreme measures.

I want to be very clear here. By no means do all outstanding athletes or likewise incredible physiques, that

inspire so many to want to be better, stronger and even healthier, use performance enhancing drugs or plastic surgery. I know many dedicated and determined athletes and fitness enthusiast who have sculpted incredible physiques. Often times taking years to reach the epitome of what is humanly possible. However popular society is saturated with unbelievable images of people who have resorted to extreme measures to be "perfect." Nor can we forget the power of digital manipulation of photography and video either. What we see is not what we get...or what we become. The extreme muscular size and ultra ripped leanness saturating media in all forms has created a perception that this is the "norm." That strict diets, supplements and endless hours of training will have everyone walking around with perfect abs, legs, derrieres, or arms with hoards of admirers in tow.

One of the most unknown secrets of these perfect bodies is....they don't look like this all of the time! Most diet down to the perfect look and then do a plethora of photo and video shoots, interviews and appearances during a limited time frame. Then spread the results of this work over a period of months even years. All the while the general populace sees them as always in elite shape. Having competed in 55 bodybuilding shows, performed with the Ventura County Ballet Company, multiple interviews and dozens of photo shoots, I know exactly how this is accomplished and have used it to full affect myself. Those who knew me in high school would have told you I looked fit, but they would also tell you I was not an extreme athlete or a champion bodybuilder by any means. I have literally been pursuing some kind of athletic endeavor since I was 8 years old, which puts me at 3 plus decades of trying to sculpt my physique to where I am now.

**“By no means do all outstanding athletes or likewise incredible physiques who inspire so many to be better, stronger, and even healthier use performance enhancing drugs or plastic surgery.” - Troy Saunders**

# Troy's Final Thoughts

I highly encourage anyone of any age to be their best physically and pursue lifelong health and fitness. The rewards have well been worth the effort both in physical pursuit and my professional pursuits as well! I feel incredibly fortunate to have had such a blessed life and to be able to pursue and achieve so many of my dreams in fitness. I also want everyone to know that elite performance and well sculpted body does not happen overnight. I was 30 years old before I won my first state championship, nearly 40 before I earned my pro-card in bodybuilding and over 40 before I set any of my National and American Powerlifting records. So regardless of your age, if you are new to pursuing your fitness dreams please give yourself time to achieve realistic goals. It is great to have inspirations, but find someone you know...someone who is real...someone who has truly accomplished their own goals through long hard work and dedication. **Whatever you do, don't look at the unbelievable images without the wisdom that what you see is not necessarily what that person is or ever was!**

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-Troy Saunders

IN MEMORY OF KRISTA PHELPS

**THANKS TROY!**

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