



## Jerry Otha

December 3, 1957 - June 14, 2016

Services to be held in Maryland

# Tribute Wall

“ Continued from my previous post...

*"In the 9 years I have known Jerry, it was always a different story, different side of a man I thought I had figured, overall different and enjoyable experience throughout each encounter. I started going back to the gym towards the end of January this year and so incredibly happy I did. I challenged myself to a transformation of mind, body and soul and having Jerry as a support system while at the gym and taking his wisdom with me is something I will honor and be forever grateful. A fitness lifestyle is one of transparency and vulnerability. It did not hit me as hard as it did yesterday, how much my gym support system was and is my family. We lost a good man too soon and only God knows why. I pray he accepted Christ and allowed him to work in his life. My last conversation with my friend began with him cracking a joke on a shoulder/deltoid exercise I do. As always it lightened the mood and to my surprise it spiraled into an in-depth and thought provoking conversation. Looking back and doing everything I can to see the silver lining, he and I had a discussion and Q & A about God, and His Son, Jesus. I recall feeling as if I was being put on the spot, but knew Jerry was a man of integrity and honesty and so I knew to answer bluntly honest as I usually would have about any other topic. A part of me truly feels that maybe God was stirring in his heart because he was about to take him away and I was put in place to simplify my understanding and faith in Christ. Though I feel restless and heart broken, I am choosing to live in peace that he is now resting in God's arms looking over me as the 'bodyguard' he told me he would last Monday. Jerry, I cared for you as a friend, confidant, fitness partner, and an incredibly genuine human being. Thank you for imparting your wisdom, stories, jokes, laughter, warm smiles, and all of who you were during the short time I had to know you. Please say hello to my loved ones and reassure them that Emery and I are doing great. God Bless and Rest in Peace always Superman (every time I wear my shirts, I will smile knowing I had the pleasure of working out with a real super man)."*

*Sincerely,  
Jessica*

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**Jessica** - June 22, 2016 at 10:33 AM

JE

“ I wanted to share only but a small piece in remembrance of my friend Jerry.

*"I have heard from time to time that writing and sharing your thoughts can be a therapeutic experience so here goes nothing. Yesterday seemed to be going along like any other day would with waking up early, doing some chores and getting ready for work, making sure the get the little one up and fed and off to work to begin my work week. Like any other Monday morning, it was a matter of getting into work mode, catching up with co-workers about weekend festivities, and diving into work tasks. As usual I would take my first break at 10am with also dropping off the mail, followed by the lunch hour which is reserved for my weight training at the gym. Pulling up to the gym as I usually do, I grabbed my gear bag and made my way in making sure I switched from a work mode mindset to focusing on the workout ahead of me and looking forward to that thoroughly exhausted feeling once it was all said and done. Knowing I was doing legs, I bolted upstairs and was heading toward my first exercise when I was politely asked to step aside to be informed of some news. My gut began to churn, my heart began to race as I was trying to wrap my mind around what I was being told. "You know Big Jerry", began Mike as I nodded and commented "Well yeah of course". "Well he passed away last Wednesday", Mike said speaking as calmly and collectively as possible. I couldn't be hearing the words that were coming out of his mouth, he must have been told wrong, there was absolutely no way, this couldn't be happening, I can't breathe...no, no, no, no, no!! Not knowing how to even be or move or what to say or function in that moment, all I could do was sob. Mike was doing everything he could to console me and reassure me that it will be okay; my heart said otherwise. How could I possibly even get to my workout, my world came to a stand-still and was ripped apart by such a small evidence of words which will have an ever lasting impact on my life. The only decision I could make at that point was to go to my mom, the one person I have run to throughout my life when I am lost, empty, confused, etc. She happens to work in the office at the gym and I barged right*

*even without notice or warning and fell over sobbing; no words, no other actions, only tears and raw emotion. She quietly sat there and nodded her head making a gesture of her knowing exactly why I was so torn up; grabbed the tissue box and laid it on the table. Trying to formulate words and sentences, I was making every attempt to come to terms with the loss of someone who I considered a genuine man, friend, and fitness companion. I was overwhelmed with waves of emotions and began to feel slightly embarrassed I was being drastically affected. It was not until I realized there would be no more "Great job, keep it up", "You got this, one more rep, look at you working it out", no more workout collaborations, no more fitness/nutrition tips, no more silly jokes or insightful advice, no more of anything I have come to know, respect, appreciate, enjoy, and learn from Jerry. A few weeks ago, we got into a conversation about doing push-ups as an added exercise for strength and he challenged me to get to 30 consecutive push-ups and I would be rewarded with learning the technique for the one-handed push-up; something I have always wanted to be able to do and now finally having the opportunity to learn. The very next day at the end of my workout, as spent as I was, I cranked out 30 perfectly executed push-ups. I had to wait until I saw him next to share my accomplishment. He applauded me and told me to remind him on his next shoulder day that he would begin to teach me. Knowing I will never have that chance to learn from him any longer or match push-up for push-up is painful, but you better bet that each rep will be one of perfect technique and control."*

*Continued on the next post...*

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**Jessica** - June 22, 2016 at 10:32 AM