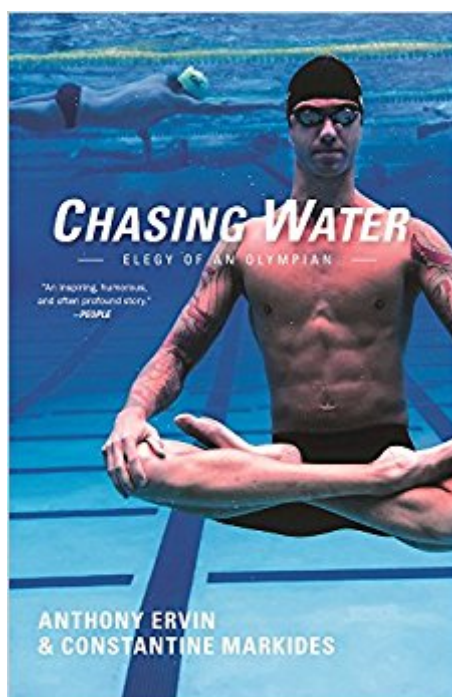


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# Chasing Water: Elegy Of An Olympian



## Synopsis

"For Anthony Ervin, the stretch between his two greatest athletic achievements – two Olympic gold medals – included a suicide attempt, a period of homelessness and a stint in a rock band. Jobs found, then lost. Too much drinking, too many drugs. Depression. Confusion. And then, a kind of rebirth." – USA Today "An inspiring, humorous and often profound biography." – People Magazine "Anthony Ervin is a lot of things. He is an open book and a closed circuit, a body fueled by a brain, an old man with a young soul. He is the American Dream. He is, once again, improbably, an Olympic champion." – Yahoo "Anthony Ervin is not only the most beautiful swimmer in the water I have ever seen, he is also one of the great stories of triumph and perseverance in the midst of tremendous adversity. I am so proud to call him my friend and I know his life's challenges will inspire generations to come." – Rowdy Gaines, swimmer, three-time Olympic gold medalist "Just a glance at the cover of the swimmer's recently published memoir *Chasing Water: Elegy of an Olympian*, reveals the intensity of Ervin's career to date. He's seen looking straight at the reader while in the full lotus pose underwater in a pool. Other swimmers are racing behind him, but Ervin doesn't see them. The message the reader receives is clear: Anthony Ervin is focused on more than the competition." – Tricycle Magazine "You won't find many athletes like Ervin, nor will you find many sports autobiographies like his recently published *Chasing Water: Elegy of an Olympian*. . . . It's fascinating." – Charlotte Observer "Ervin, a former world record-holder, won gold in Rio in the 4x100m free and 50m free races. He's also overcome incredible odds, surviving depression, homelessness, and addiction in the years between his record-breaking 2000 Olympic performance and his comeback in 2012. His book, *Chasing Water*, tells the story of those times." – Miami New Times "Every four years in the Olympic cycle the surge of national interest in swimming grows, and with it a desire to be captivated by its stars. This book tells the dramatic, surprising, and sometimes provocative path that Anthony Ervin has taken to become one of those captivating Olympic heroes. Not your typical sports memoir, *Chasing Water* also contains arresting black-and-white drawings and a graphic story extra, as well as an inventive and mercurial narrative style that morphs chapter by chapter to reflect Ervin's restless, multifaceted life. Ervin won a gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games at the age of nineteen. He is an athlete branded with a slew of titles including being the first US Olympic swimmer of African American descent, along with Jewish heritage, who also grew up with Tourette's syndrome. He shocked the sporting world by retiring soon after claiming two world titles following the 2000 Olympics. Auctioning off his gold medal for charity, he set off on a part spiritual quest, part self-destructive bender that involved Zen temples, fast motorcycles, tattoo parlors, and rock 'n' roll

bands. Then Ervin resurfaced in 2012 to not only make the US Olympic team twelve years after his first appearance, but to continue his career by swimming faster than ever before. At the Rio Olympics in August 2016, Ervin "wrote" the most fitting afterword to his astonishing story, winning two gold medals, becoming the oldest swimmer (from any nation) to win a gold medal in an individual race, and--in finishing first in the 50-meter freestyle--once again earning the title of fastest human in water.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Anthony does a great job of telling the swimmer's story without over-telling it. It's a biography, he covers his childhood up to the 2012 Olympics. The book is half written by him in the 1st person and half written by another author in the 3rd person. It's a much more intellectual storytelling experience than other swim books I've seen, which romanticize the sport (not a bad thing) or focus on the emotional ride. He asks some really good questions throughout. The book also covers what's going through his mind from a very normal childhood (angsty kid) to wandering young adult (sex, drugs, rock and roll life). I found myself surprised how often I highlighted his reflections, hoping to learn from his lessons with his parents, peers and his own mind (he lived with depression at different times). This book somehow made me excited to swim again.

Heard about this book on Rich Roll's podcast (he wrote a great book, Finding Ultra) and was intrigued given Ervin's return to the Rio Olympics. It goes from Anthony's first person narrative to the co-author and friend's Constantine's view/almost interview questions. More an introspective into

Anthony's intellectual and spiritual journey through life (and sometimes v off the beaten path!) than a typical athletic memoir, it's amazing that he made it to Rio gold, let alone is still alive!! Surprised I highlighted quite a lot of passages - but appreciate his vulnerability and honesty putting his story out there in the world. Be forewarned, some parts are graphic and may not be suitable for a younger audience. Don't need to be a swimmer to appreciate it (but you'll love and be inspired by the race/training references if you are). And if you went to Cal, you'll love the old stomping ground references. Would love a follow-up post Rio and pre-Tokyo book. Go Bears!!

The story helps illuminate the intense sport of competitive swimming. I tired of keeping track of Anthony Ervin's personal challenges. This man has some unique challenges, but he is his own worst enemy. I wish him well, but his story really didn't warrant an entire book.

I have been reading "Chasing Water" for only a few days. It is a powerful book, filled with the author's reflective and deep expression of the hardships he has faced yet his undying courage, giving nature and love for all. In reading this book, I pray the world is filled with more people like Anthony. Anthony is a heroe, he is like a saint in his humbleness and giving nature. I felt pain to hear him always criticize himself. He is such a special person and his willingness to share his journey with the world is beyond courageous. Thank you for this amazing work to Constantine Markides for working with Anthony on this amazing project. The book is both historical, poetic, spiritual and the blatant reality of what so many of us are too timid to portray, our weaknesses and self criticisms; but in Athony's case how he overcomes them and he sure has.

Anthony Ervin is one of those rare people who comes along and has actually lived a life more interesting than your own. After leaving the world of swimming behind, Ervin went and traveled the world trying to find himself and also realize what was missing from his life. This book take you from California to Amsterdam and back. This is a great book from who might be the most interesting man in the sport.

This was a great, well written story. Switching between an outside author and Tony's personal narrative made for any easy read that seemed natural. I just wish it could have had Tony's triumphant gold medal at the Rio Games as part of it! Congrats Tony!

Ervin's story is much more than a swimming biography. He has lived a most interesting life full of

ups and downs. The book is a good and open story of family, friends, music overcoming demons/drugs and yes some good swimming stuff. He is a "no label" good person. It would be a great story if he could make the 2016 Olympic team. It will be tough but don't count him out after call that he has accomplished.

As a swimmer my review might be slightly biased because I can relate to so much of the book, but even for the non swimmer this is a fantastic read. This book is unlike any other athlete biography I've ever read. Its incredibly raw and honest, following Anthony from childhood through his highs and lows. The author does a great job narrating while letting Anthony's voice and story shine. I found it inspiring, especially reading it a couple months before the Olympics. It made me feel like I knew him and what brought him to that moment winning gold. Don't hesitate, buy it, download it, share it with friends cause its a great book and a staple in my library now

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