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## JACLYN SMITH

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# San Diego's jogging shrink

By Susan Price-Root

"Modern man is a running animal in a poorly run zoo," says Dr. Thaddeus Kostrubala, otherwise known as San Diego's jogging shrink. To the tune of \$50 a session, he has devised a new way of helping patients: He takes them running, a technique he finds effective in treating depression, drug abuse, anorexia nervosa (appetite loss) and even severe schizophrenia.

Jogging three times a week for one hour brings about biochemical changes that balance mind and body, he claims. "Running together also creates a rapport between patient and therapist that extends deep into the unconscious. I've seen some astonishing changes in personality and life style from jogging."

Not the least astonishing is the change in Kostrubala's own life. In 1953, at the age of 23, he was selected by computer to be featured in a *Holliday* article on young people most likely to influence America's future. After graduating from Northwestern and the University of Virginia School of

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## Psychiatrist Thaddeus Kostrubala joins his patients in a run for mental health

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Medicine, he settled into a sedentary existence. As the late Mayor Daley's director of mental health, he was a lazy 230-pounder whose most active exercise was yelling at the crew on his sailboat.

Now Kostrubala, at a trim 5 feet 11 inches and 180 pounds, jogs at least an hour a day, runs four 26-mile marathons a year and believes that competitiveness poisons mind and body. The change began with a physical exam in 1971. "I was embarrassed to see myself in the eyes of another doctor—fat, high blood pressure, a wreck." So he tried jogging. He was so impressed with the results that six months later he took a group of patients out to run. Noting their improvement, he began researching the link between physical fitness and mental health. The result was a book, *The Joy of Running*, published by J.B. Lippincott last year.

"My totem animal used to be a bear. I was sluggish and ponderous in everything I did. Now my totem animal is a falcon," says Kostrubala, medical director for the Department of Mental Health at San Diego's Mercy Hospital. "The totem animal is part of our personal subconscious imagery. In fact, I once speared a polar bear at Point Hope in Alaska. I wonder what that meant?" he muses.

With the change in totem animals came a new life style, the symbol of which is his shaved head. "I don't know why I did it, but then I never know why I do anything until 10 years afterward," he says breezily. The streamlining also extended to his condominium at Playmor, a development outside San Diego. Tatami mats have replaced chairs and beds, and there's a hot tub on the deck where he and his "family" soak. "We have our own little coven here," he says with a grin.

At 47, Kostrubala has three ex-wives and seven children, but his jogging "family" consists of close friends and patients as well. His 15-year-old daughter, Anika, lives with him; his ex-wife Ann lives a block away with their two toddlers, Tadz and Giovanna. His fiancée, Teresa Clitmose,

**Above: "We were hunters in prehistoric times, so it's in our genes to be runners," says Kostrubala (center).**



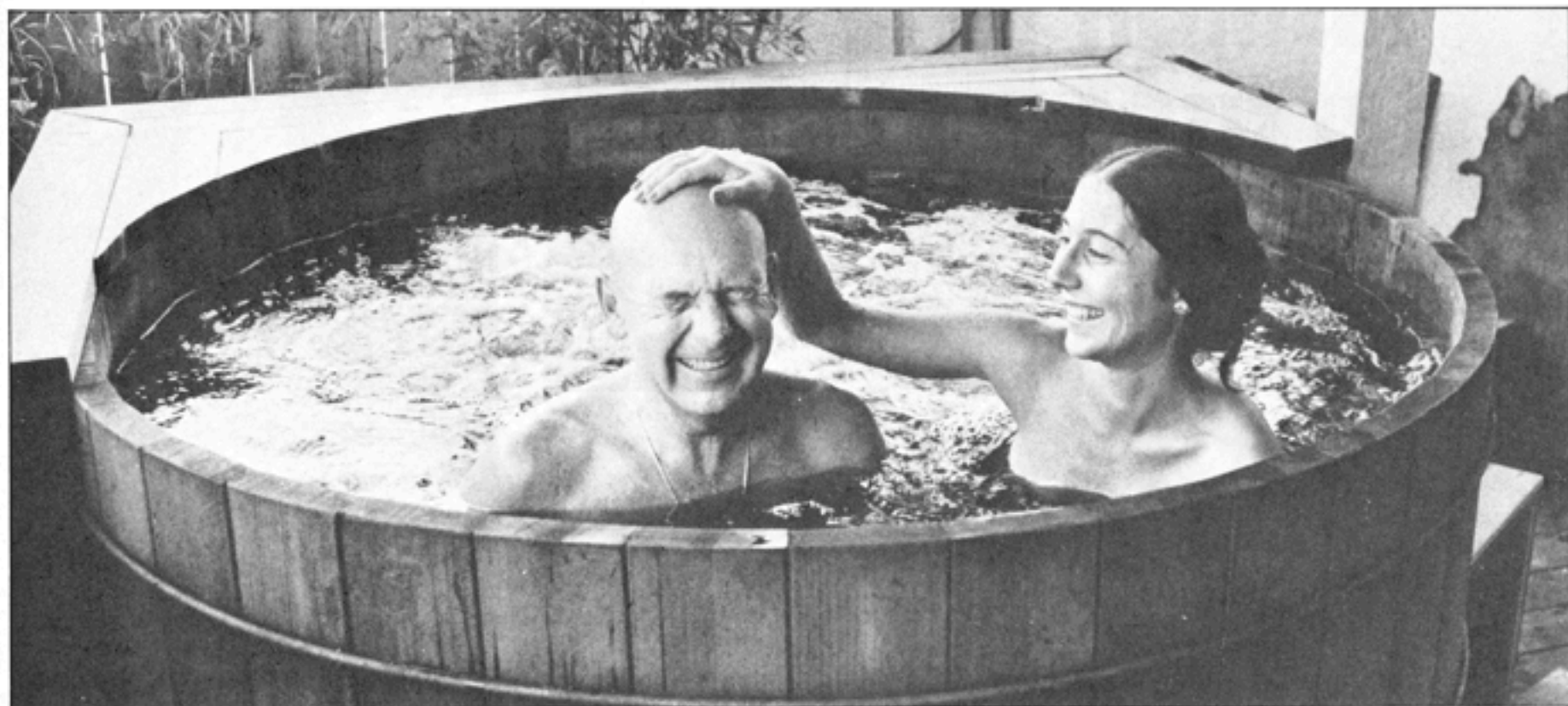
26. is adjusting to the discovery that she's heir to a \$3.5 million real estate fortune. She is also writing her Ph.D. dissertation on the personality type of the female marathon runner. Others in the clan include a podiatrist who specializes in runners' problems and a marriage counselor who teaches "running with style" at the San Diego Marathon Clinic, founded by Kostru-

bala. A huge success, the clinic attracts 500 to 700 runners on Sunday mornings.

Also in the "family" is a former patient hospitalized for paranoid schizophrenia as a teen-ager. "I wouldn't even get out of bed, but Tad got me running," she says. "Now I'm getting straight A's and I feel great."

Though Kostrubala advocates prim-

itive social rituals—breaking bread together, sitting around the fire swapping tales—he's come up with a few new ones. "Ann and I are going to have a divorce ritual," he says. "Nothing elaborate, just some simple food, a short jog, the hot tub. It'll be an occasion to mark all the spiritual things we shared, a good way to indicate the sacredness of our marriage." □



Photographs by Ted Lau

"We're more than a circle of close friends," says Teresa Clitmore of the Kostrubala jogging clan.