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DWTS: Ego Bruised But Not Broken

Published March 21, 2014

The first week Fox Trot for @HenryByalikov and me was filled with pride. I may not bring the stuff of Olympic ice dancers but we worked our butts off and I was thrilled to pull off a proper Fox Trot, something entirely alien to me just one week prior.

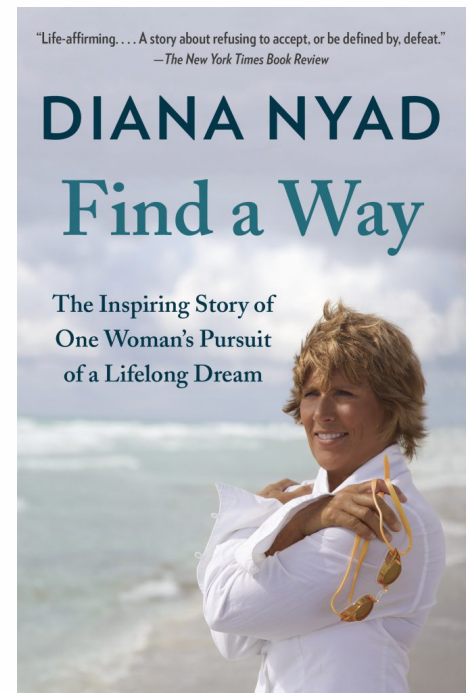
Matter of fact, was proud of ALL the contestants, to watch them produce art and beauty and fun and put their best out there in front of a 20-million strong audience.

Every single one of the pro dancers (along obviously with my wonderful, talented, supportive, gracious Henry) have bent over backwards to give some guidance to me and all the rest of us competing. Max Chmerkovskiy, reputed bad boy, has especially extended a caring warmth to me.

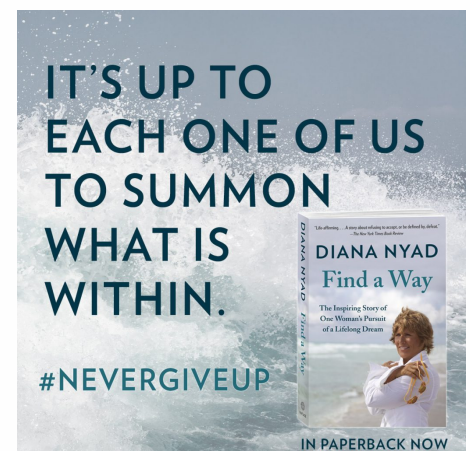
(I love when Max and Henry chat in Russian....Henry from Australia but both parents Russian...they call me "Dianaishka"... sounds very sexy indeed!)

Cheryl Burke and the other female pros have also reached out to give all kinds of tips and reassurances. (I've put it out there that, if I am still in the competition by the time they switch partners for one week, I would love to do a dance with Cheryl). And don't get me wrong. I ADORE my Henry....just saying...

Perhaps it gets cutthroat later in the season, when the MirrorBall Trophy is on the line but at this early-going stage, all 12 of us competitors are very supportive of each other. No matter the



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difference in our range of talents, everybody checks in with each other, asks how the particular dance of the week is going, shares what they're

experiencing. Charlie White and Meryl Davis, clearly superlative on
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total non-issue. Candace Cameron Bure is a born mom, takes care of all of our feelings. And Henry and I have had some fun practice sessions with NeNe Leakes and her partner Tony Dovolani, the jokster of the pros.

Henry putting me through the paces of the Cha Cha Cha, our dance for Week Two, and I'm loving the rhythm. Much more relatable, for me, than was The Fox Trot. I took an ego beating that first night. Worked so darn hard on that Fox Trot and wound up near the bottom of the leader board. But what a great rationalization to feel you've got absolutely nowhere to go but up...

As I said that night....and we've all learned this the hard way... "It's not how you start. It's how you finish."

Honestly, as much as I feel I've known this show, DWTS is a vastly more intense experience than I imagined. The dance work itself, at least for me, is mentally engrossing. Every move Henry deftly shows me, articulates for me (he used the image of cracking an egg, for example, in one area of the Fox Trot....two quick, staccato steps, like the quick crack of the egg shell, and then a long ooze of the leg and body, like the liquid oozing from the egg), takes my full attention. And then there are literally dozens of those details to take in...all in a very short amount of time....and then to be performed LIVE....OMG!!!

I'm overjoyed to be part of it. I am in a constant state of delight to be so close so quickly to my new friend Henry Byalikov. We went together to Cirque du Soleil TOTEM one night, both to hang out away from the studio and for inspiration from those magical performers. And now I must return to the Cha Cha Cha....next Monday's show time is coming at me rather quickly...cha cha cha...

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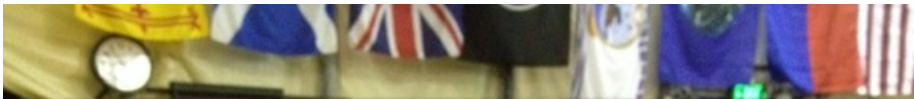
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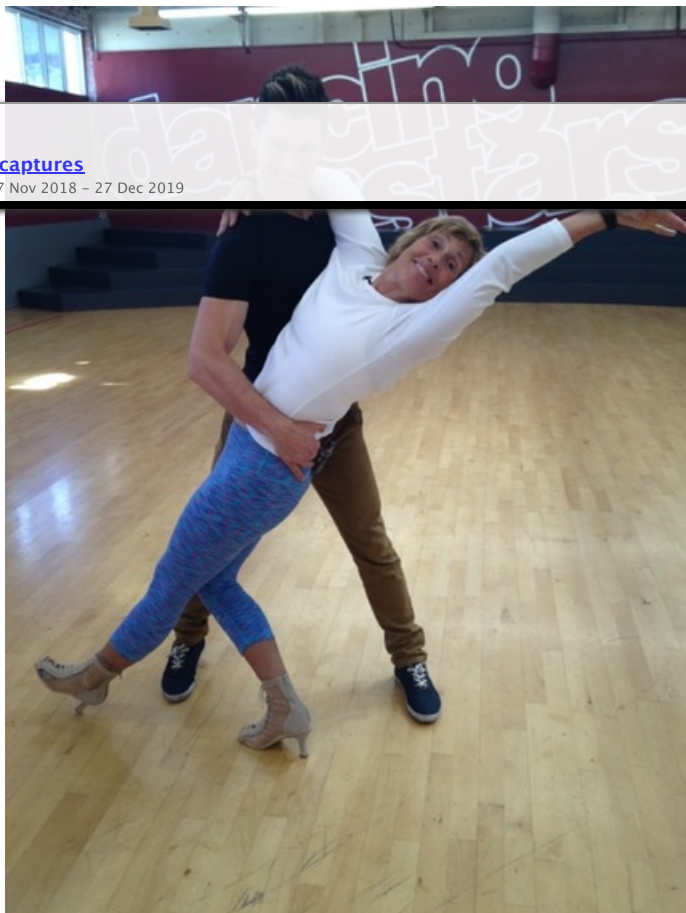


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