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Bonnie's Reflections

Posted by Xtreme Dream Team on Sep 28, 2011 in [Blog](#), [Slider](#) | [6 comments](#)

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photo credit Christi Barli

Bonnie Stoll is Diana's chief handler and her best friend. Her reflections on this past swim:

For me, this past attempt of Diana swimming from Havana to Florida, was made up of beauty, stress, will, stress, strength, stress, courage, stress, beauty, stress, fear, stress, terror...all of it — all happening at the same time — ALL of the time. That's how it felt — all the time. And every second of the experience was a complete pleasure. I hope it's hard for you to imagine because it is so difficult to convey.

[Steve Munatones](#), the independent observer on the swim, responded to Bonnie's statement:

Bonnie,
Every week of the year, in places all over the world, people do marathon swims. Similar to you, they experience something profound, yet inexplicable, because marathon swimming has little comparison to other adventures or activities in our land-based existence. Everyone internalizes what they saw, heard and felt while they were miles from shore — but few are satisfied with their explanations.

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Diana's Tweets



- Ladies & Gentleman, Mr . Wayne Lewis
SPEAKS: <http://ow.ly/6K47W> about 3 hours ago from HootSuite
- [@michaeldavis777](#) my pleasure! about 6 hours ago from HootSuitein reply to [michaeldavis777](#)
- Sorry for the mistake on the dates for the webinar. Who was able to attend? How did you enjoy it? about 7 hours ago from HootSuite
- Myself and my team try hard to keep you all updated. Missed anything? Check out the blog for lots of info, videos & updates <http://ow.ly/...> about 10 hours ago from HootSuite
- [@rosementon](#) Possibly, we shall see :) 06:10:04 PM September 29, 2011 from HootSuitein reply to [rosementon](#)

The relationship between you and Diana during that swim was extraordinary. Like co-pilots to the moon, you both were in a realm that is difficult to explain to others. Even though I witnessed your interaction during the swim, the depths in which you both understood each other was beyond my comprehension. What goes on between a coach and marathon swimmer is best conveyed via a Japanese concept of communications – Isshin denshin:

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photo credit Christi Barli

Isshin denshin (or 一心伝心) is a Japanese concept of communication. Out in the ocean, during a lake swim or sitting on an escort boat, many experienced open water swimming coaches and athletes employ this form of communication.

Because the means of communication is limited during marathon swims, many times information between coach and athlete must be conveyed in unspoken or unwritten ways. This nonverbal, mutual understanding between a coach and an open water swimmer is something special and must be cultivated over time.

When open water swimmers and their coaches communicate through a nod, a smile, a thumbs up, a wink, a wave or a "look" (seen through a pair of goggles or sunglasses) while in the ocean, lake, sea, bay or river, this isshein-denshin just feels right. It communicates what is necessary. Both the coach on board an escort boat or kayak and the athlete in the water understand the communication and internalize the information being relayed from coach-to-athlete and from athlete-to-coach.

These implied communication skills, that may be unfathomable by others onshore or on the escort boat, are one reason why many people in the open water world understand the concept of 'what the mind thinks the heart transmits.' -via [OpenWaterPedia.com](#)



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Adriana

September 28, 2011

You both are truly inspiring, and the type of people I only strive to be. Bonnie, we have all felt your love, commitment, and devotion to Diana through this entire

journey. I don't even know you but I wish you were my friend.

Thank you both.

Reply

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M.

September 28, 2011

this, i think, is also what goes on between mothers and their children.

a deep, deep, deep connection where two people *know* each other in ways that are more basic and more profound than language can ever convey.

brava to both of you.

Reply



Jean golden

September 28, 2011

We are all so grateful for the way you have watched over Diana these past months and years, Bonnie. You have been a devoted friend and fabulous trainer.

Reply



Kate Fitz

September 29, 2011

It is nearly impossible to imagine... I have the greatest respect and admiration for the both of you. I hope you can feel the emotion that has been generated by all of your supporters. This has been a deep experience for all and based on love for you and your incredible passion.

Reply



Karen Ratts

September 29, 2011

I do have the distinct pleasure of being Bonnie's friend and she is indeed as incredible as you imagine. Diana and Bonnie are amazing individuals and as a team they are unstoppable.

All my love to you,
Coach K

Reply



Janet hinkle

September 30, 2011

Diana ...we are confident you will channel your dynamic energy into a new Dream...one that will be rewarding in a new way. It was wonderful meeting you in Key West...I pray our paths will cross again...

Reply

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Diana Nyad's Xtreme Dream

"Diana is more than a swimmer. She's a beacon of hope to us all that we can dream big, live life large, and look back at all of it with no regrets whatsoever."

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Xtreme Dream. For Diana Nyad's representation please contact Pam Derderian