



My View

FIND A WAY

Recently, I sat in awe as I watched Diana Nyad emerge from the ocean in Key West Florida having swam from Cuba. It was her 5th attempt and at age 64 she survived sharks and fatal jelly fish infested waters to become the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida.

I heard many interviews of Nyad after her historic swim, and in every interview she was asked: *"What did you think about during the long swim?"* She responded: *"I used a mantra which I said over and over to myself during the swim. My mantra was: Find a Way."* She went on to say that her "Find a Way" mantra was key to her preparing for and completing the swim.

What a great mantra for living our lives!

And I believe it's also a great mantra for growing and operating an organization like ours, where there are many challenges and occasional "shark attacks."

I dare say that although we haven't made "Find a Way" the official mantra of the TIP organization, we have had a "Find a Way" attitude embedded in our organizational DNA for a long time.

I have witnessed TIP Volunteers and TIP leaders for the last 28 years "finding a way". From the very beginning, the founding of the TIP Program was a process of "finding a way" to overcome many obstacles and "shark encounters".

For TIP Volunteers, "finding a way" is a necessary attitude on TIP Calls. Our volunteers help others in complex and seemingly "unsolvable" situations. The solution to helping our clients is usually not found in our manuals. It's up to our Volunteers to "find a way" through each and every call.

On a regular basis, TIP Leaders are confronted with challenges that cause them (and me) to say *"WOW, how am I going to deal with this?!"* Our leaders need to "find a way" to raise money, to fill a 24/7 schedule, to encourage emergency responders to call TIP, to expand the program to new agencies ... the list goes on. But despite the nature and enormity of the challenges, TIP Leaders always seem to "find a way".

Of course having a "find a way" attitude doesn't work miracles. Often it takes time to solve problems and to overcome challenges. After all, it took Diana Nyad five times (and four failures) and over 30 years to achieve her dream of swimming from Cuba to Florida.

But while having a persistent "we will find a way" attitude rarely leads to immediate success, it does ensure that we will be an organization that is confident, hopeful and optimistic. And good things happen to confident and optimistic organizations.

A mentor once told me: *"Stick around long enough and good things will happen."* "Sticking Around" sounds simple, but it's not easy. It requires that on a daily basis we say to ourselves what Diana Nyad said to herself during her historic swim: FIND A WAY.

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