Teachers

Every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



crossing the Atlantic, March 1982

As a toddler learning to swim and snorkel from our yacht 'Hornpipe' in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, I learnt by trying to emulate my parents and keep up with my older brother, Sam.

Semi-mythical acquaintances, like Benoit the Tahitian pearl-diver, defined an unthinkable but still inspirational boundary of human depths: I remember his 110 feet, but Sam's less erratic memory has him diving to 90 feet (27m). Our own frenzied spurts took us to 14 meters, ages 8 and 10, and our father could disentangle an anchor at 20m (all facts we proudly wore like badges in conversations with other boating kids).

However the lessons that have enabled me to become a better freediver have mostly been learnt out of the water. I see them now, as a kind of string of Aesop's fables that make up my life, and continue to do so. The nearer lessons are invisible, still in the process of assimilation, while those at a greater distance are familiar and well-defined.



woodworking, New Zealand 1986

Making wood carvings alongside my father David in his workshop I learnt that that initial ecstasy of inspiration will never last you to the end of the task - after its energy was exhausted by the first gleeful hour of chiseling then if patience and discipline didn't take over you'd be left with a hacked-at block of wood that only half-resembled the intended camel/giraffe/whale.

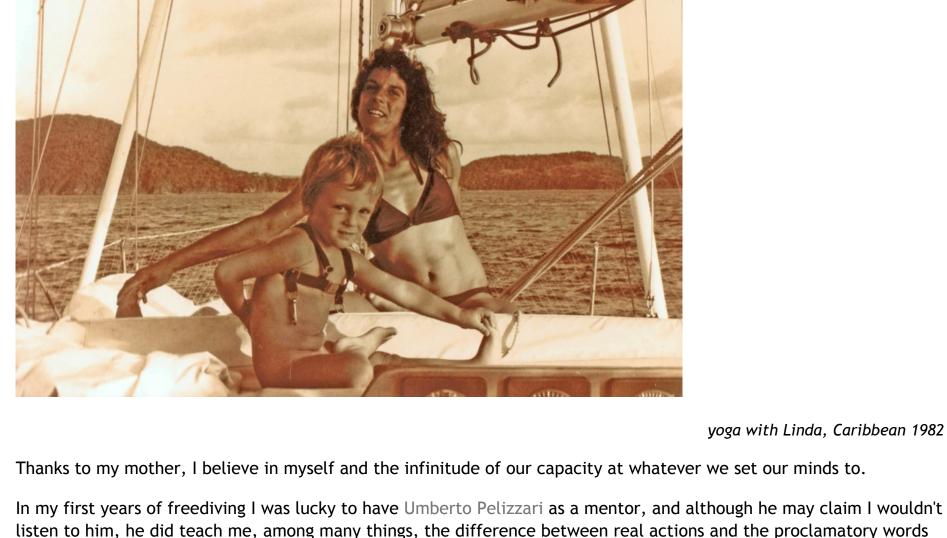
Watching him steadily work to create elaborate works and an even more elaborate lifework, in the same way that he steadily devoured mountain ranges on our long hikes, I've witnessed the archetype of patience and discipline.



David Trubridge, circa 2010 Thanks to my father, I have never reneged on a training session, or quit when results were discouraging.

My mother, Linda, who hand-sewed stuffed animal toys, quilts and costumes for my brother and I, who consummately praised us for whatever we did while propelling us to something greater, represented a distillation of altruism that

inspires me to this day. By coaxing and encouraging us - to write it a little clearer, to paint it a little more attentively, to play it a little more fluidly - she taught me that there was always more inside: more creativity, more potential, more depth.



competitor, who I have dived alongside and not learned from in some way.

yoga with Linda, Caribbean 1982

that can sometimes disperse our intention for action.

shaped my life. My childhood friend, who was a kind of subconscious influence in my first tentative months of

freediving, appearing in my sleep to tell me "stand in your dream"; my closest high school friends who have been both beacons and mirrors. No one operates in a vacuum, and just as we acquire the tools of our predecessors we also share (blog about) or follow (steal!) the advances of our peers. It's unlikely that there is a single freediver, whether training partner or

I could list a town-sized group of people here and still only touch on the legion of teachers and examples that have



Vanuatu, 1988 I've always believed that creativity, innovation and perhaps even positive energy in general have a kind of syphoning

quality to them: the more you draw from these pure mountain waters then the more will spring up to replace it, while

on the other hand hoarding leads to stagnation of the source. Dissemination of understanding and techniques should be as natural as their acquisition. It's thanks to those who share a similar view that I am where I am today, and as long as I am able to help others myself then I will still have access to