

The Villages Scuba Club



Peer Pressure in Diving

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Peer Pressure in Diving

- This presentation was (mostly) lifted from the Divers Alert Network TV channel on Youtube:
 - Peer Pressure in Diving: How friends and dive buddies influence your decisions -
<https://www.youtube.com/live/OA1de-vEGPU?si=uVnzE9xbettnuWpd>
- The Divers Alert Network TV channel is available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/@DiversAlertNetworkTV>



Definition: Peer Pressure

social pressure by members of one's peer group to take a certain action, adopt certain values, or otherwise conform in order to be accepted.



The Players

- Family
- Friends
- Dive Buddys
- Dive Professionals
- Social Media
- Yourself!



Family, Friends & Dive Buddys

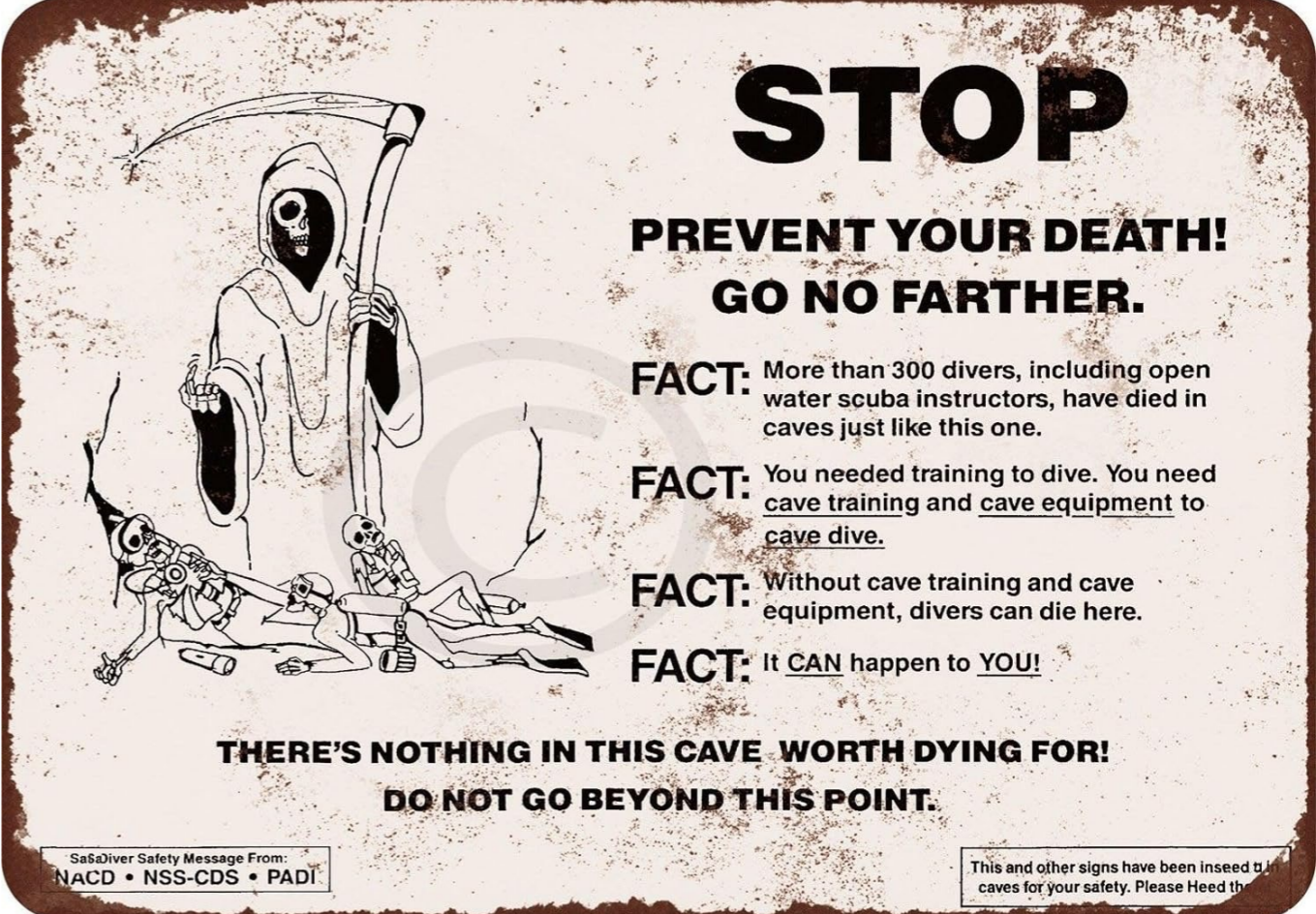
- Honey, you should learn to dive!
- We've driven this far to do the dive.
- You'll be fine! I'll watch out for you.
- I've done this dive hundreds of times.
- Let's have a couple more drinks, the boat only leaves at 08:00.



Case 1

Going beyond one's training level

- Buddy team dives open water at a cave site
- Diver A decides to dive into the cavern area.
- Diver B is hesitant but doesn't want to stay behind.
- Diver A silts out the cavern, complicating navigation for both divers. Both become disoriented.
- They eventually find their way out and surface with under 200psi in their tank.



STOP

**PREVENT YOUR DEATH!
GO NO FARTHER.**

FACT: More than 300 divers, including open water scuba instructors, have died in caves just like this one.

FACT: You needed training to dive. You need cave training and cave equipment to cave dive.

FACT: Without cave training and cave equipment, divers can die here.

FACT: It CAN happen to YOU!

**THERE'S NOTHING IN THIS CAVE WORTH DYING FOR!
DO NOT GO BEYOND THIS POINT.**

SaSaDiver Safety Message From:
NACD • NSS-CDS • PADI

This and other signs have been in used in caves for your safety. Please Heed the

Your training level

- You will be fine, 100ft is no different from 70ft.
- You can go into the wreck, I'll be right behind you.
- Here, you'll need a light, it's gonna be dark down there.



The Dive Pro

- The visibility is not bad today, that's totally normal.
- Even our open water students dive in this swell.
- Your weights are fine, you don't need more!



Case 2

Following only advice you want to hear

- A diver surfaced after a rapid ascent with blood in their ear.
- A medical professional with diving knowledge on board examined the ear and advised the diver not to dive again that day.
- The dive professionals on the boat convinced the diver to dive anyway because his neuro check was clear, and diver denied any pain.
- A ruptured ear drum and ear infection prevented the diver from diving for the rest of the trip



The Dive Pro's Responsibility

- Your #1 responsibility is the safety of your divers in the water
- Customers look up to you and your experience
- Customers rely on you for your expertise



Self-inflicted pressure

- They are all waiting for me
- I always use more gas and ruin the dive for everyone
- I have never used a DSMB but I don't want to hold up the group

Case 3

Omitting pre-dive checks

- Diver A gears up for a group dive off a boat
- The group is already waiting in the water
- Diver A skips pre-dive check to catch up
- Diver A descends to 60ft and realizes his regulator stopped working properly.
- Diver aborts the dive with a rapid ascent.
- Diver A's air was only partially open



Don't rush

- Develop a routine for your pre-dive checks and stick with it
- Avoid distractions while you check your gear
- Omitting checks or forgetting gear can have dire consequences

Case 4

Cutting corners - Normalization of deviance

- Rebreather diver takes a breath on the surface and begins to feel dizzy
- Next thing they remember is waking up on the boat as crew being providing oxygen
- Diver reflects on having issues with the computer connecting to the unit before the trip
- Buddy was first to enter the water, so diver began to rush
- Diver did not verify if solenoid was firing, computer was not connected and diver missed their P02 dropping



Overcoming fears

- Assess your personal comfort level
- Define what you are struggling with
- Find an instructor who understands those



Other Pressures

- Needing to work (*dive guide/crew*)
- Money spent
- Operators and their expenses

Case 5

Other pressures can impair better judgement

- Diver spearfishes for income to support his family
- Feels dizzy after two dives
- Friends discourage him from doing another dive
- Diver does the dive anyway, dive conditions become more challenging (strong current)
- Diver panics and makes a rapid ascent
- Diver loses consciousness
- Falls in a coma and is later pronounced dead.



Culture of Dive Safety

- Psychological Safety:
 - *Team members need to feel safe to speak up*
- New divers rarely challenge a more experienced diver.
- Instructors: Is your student ready to be certified?



Use Peer Pressure for Good...

- Support the diver who called the dive
- Influence others to do the right thing
- Speak up if you witness peer pressure



Be a Role Model and Influencer

- Check your own gear
- Involve your team members in the pre-dive checks
- Facilitate briefings and debriefings
- Call the dive if you don't feel up for it
 - *at any time for any or no reason*



Takeaway Messages

- Anyone can call any dive for any reason at any time
- Use peer pressure to do good
- Share your experiences and let others learn from them



Questions or Comments?