

A large sea turtle, likely a hawksbill, is swimming horizontally across the frame. The turtle's carapace is dark with light-colored mottled patterns. Its head is pointed towards the right, and its flippers are visible. The background is a clear, blue ocean with a coral reef visible in the lower half of the image. The text "The Villages Scuba Club" is overlaid in white on the upper left portion of the image.

The Villages Scuba Club

Managing Dive Anxiety

WARREN GROSS 03 SEPTEMBER 2025

Fear and Anxiety

- *My interpretation - not a doctor, not reviewed by medical experts.*
- Fear and Anxiety are not the same thing.
- Fear is a temporary reaction or emotion to a known or actual threat -
 - Healthy levels of fear heightens the senses and, typically, causes proper caution and alertness.
- Anxiety is a longer-lasting stress response to a perceived threat -
 - Anxiety tends to prevent enjoyment and thrill.

“What worries you, masters you.” - John Locke

Managing Anxiety - Preparing for the Dive

- Prepare properly
 - Pre-pack your gear. Use a checklist.
 - Get a good night's sleep.
 - Hydrate early.
 - Arrive to the dive site early.
 - Assemble your gear early.
 - Take seasickness medicine.

Managing Anxiety - Your Gear

- Use the right gear -
 - Proper fit.
 - Properly maintained.
 - Keep your gear simple -
 - Don't carry more than you need.
 - Eliminate lanyards, use similar clips.
 - Organize your gear -
 - A place for everything and everything in its place.
 - Easily reached without interference from other gear.
 - Know how to use your gear -
 - Dive computers and pressure gauges.
 - BCD dump valves.
-

Managing Anxiety - Diving Skills

- Improve your skills.
- Perfect practice makes perfect.
- Get your weighting and buoyancy under control.
- Keep track of your dives in a log.
- Go diving more often.

Managing Anxiety - During the Dive

- Pre-dive talk with your buddy.
- Stick with your buddy.
- Dive to your skill level (or less).
- Keep everything slow -
 - Breathing.
 - Movement.
- Limit your task loading.

Comments? Questions?

*"Remember, today is the tomorrow
you worried about yesterday." —
Dale Carnegie*