

# Disabled Diving Dialogues

**“Depth of me”**

by  
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## Abstract

This practice based research project explored how scuba diving can be a positive experience for divers and potential divers with quadriplegia, and members of their crew. I intend to illustrate how scuba diving can be an inclusive sport producing social and physical advantages by suggesting that once we are underwater, we are an inclusive community of divers. Although some people with disabilities need to have help to get ready to dive, when underwater the commitment is turned around as everyone needs to have a buddy to dive with. We all help each other and no one dives alone; we use the buddy system – “you look out for me and I look out for you”. As my method, I filmed a dive with Tom Schofield and his Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) crew both above and under the water at the Niagara scuba Park in Ontario.

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to my sons Kenny Rockwell, who undertook the filming of the underwater sequences, and George Partridge, who shot most of the above ground footage and interview footage and was invaluable in the editing and analysis of all the post production work.

## Dedication

To my mum who, by her love and utter belief in me, made me brave; to my father who always supported me in ways he could; to my sister who says I am the bravest person she knows; to Paul who encourages me when I doubt myself; and to my children James, George and Kenny who are all things to me. These people and their belief in me makes me able to accomplish things I sometimes think I cannot.

# Table of Contents

1. Handicapped Scuba Diving .....	1
2. A New Model of Disability .....	7
2.1.The Medical Model .....	7
2.2.The Social Model .....	9
2.3.Proposed Inclusive Model .....	10
2.4.Alienation and why it is important to fit in .....	11
3. Practice Based Research .....	13
4. Making of the Film .....	15
4.1.The First Pass - Chronological .....	15
4.2.The Second Pass - Dramatic Start .....	16
4.3.The Third Pass – Almost there .....	18
4.4.The Fourth Pass - Edit Request .....	19
4.5.The Fifth Pass - The Final Cut .....	20
5. Decrying the ‘Supercrip’ .....	24
6. Wrapping up .....	26
7. References .....	29
Appendix A .....	32





# 1. Handicapped Scuba Diving

I am a scuba diver with the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) level of dive master. I am also a Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) scuba dive master (Certification Number: DM-3583) and I dive with people with physical disabilities. People with physical and intellectual disabilities are certified through HSA as they need to be assessed for levels of help and also to have a more stringent level of testing to enable them to be independent in the water, or safely supervised<sup>1</sup>. The different open water HSA training is done because each diver is an individual and HSA dive masters need to come up with strategies and safety procedures very specific to the individual's needs. Each potential HSA diver needs to be assessed for both mental and physical abilities and a dive plan tailored to the individual needs of the diver. HSA specializes in this individual approach, which is more inclusive than the PADI dive program where all individuals are taught the same skills in a uniform way. The training is more stringent because the needs of the individual may be more challenging depending upon the person's level of abilities and we all want to have a safe and rewarding experience.

I love to dive and explore the underwater world. We are weightless and encased in a total sensory calmness in the water world. This makes it a per-

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.doitnow.co.za/content/disabled-people-take-scuba-diving>

fect environment for people who are in some ways challenged by their body's range of functions. An important aspect of the diving experience is the buddy system, which is a requirement underwater, where you dive in pairs or in a pre-defined team whose purpose is to check at all times, that all members of the buddy team are not in distress and have fully functioning equipment including clean, breathable air. When something is not right, the team surfaces or helps the other team members underwater. We decide before we dive who will partner with whom and what to do should an emergency arise.

I have observed while diving with low vision or blind divers how they move their bodies through the water slowly and gracefully, touching gently the water and maybe some permanent water dwellers. Part of my HSA training is to put my gear together and take a dive wearing a blacked out mask. I was very interested in learning the feeling of being a low vision or blind diver because before that my thoughts were all about the things I would see. I wanted to have an understanding of what the experience was like and what someone who was not visual would get out of what I perceived to be a very visual experience. I was very surprised to find out how much I enjoyed the sensual nature of the water and the weightlessness.

When I dive as part of a team with vision impaired divers, we communicate with a predetermined set of instructions: for example, 'up' is a very definite touching of the top of the hand; and 'down' is an equally definite

touching of the bottom of the hand. Before we - diver and divemaster - gounderwater, we understand this set of commands and practice these signals together to make sure our method of communication is working.

Mobility impaired people have a different set of experiences out of their wheelchair. In the water, without mobility aids and any potential aches or pains they may experience on land, they are weightless and able to move around using their hands or aided by a HSA trained diver along accompanying them. Sue Austin, a seasoned diver on wheelchair, states "It is more like flying than diving and brings the most amazing sense of freedom." (Austin, 2010)

Deaf persons and people with speech difficulties would thrive in this environment where no one can hear as well and has to communicate with hand signals and gesturing. Underwater, the communication is all visual and this is something they are comfortable with but we are strangers to.

I believe that scuba diving is arguably the most inclusive sport because it is available to everyone, is non-competitive, uses the buddy system, is appropriate for all fitness levels and reputed to be a rather fun and glamorous, sport as depicted by James Bond in Thunderball (1995).

I have made a film about diving with my friend Tom Schofield, who is a certified open water scuba diver<sup>2</sup>. He recalls the time when he dove into a swimming pool in the shallow end, breaking his neck, resulting in a permanent form of quadriplegia. He remembers jumping in and floating face downwards in the pool unable to breathe. His friends shouted at him to “stop horsing around” but luckily had the maturity to roll him over otherwise he may well have drowned. They had all been trained in first aid so knew to call for an ambulance. He recalls that there was no physical pain, but he remembers with awesome clarity that it was something serious and at 14, life as he had known it, was forever changed. He recalls how, at 14, he thought he was going to be put in a room somewhere and forgotten about.

There are not many mainstream films about disabled persons being shown in a positive or sporty way. There are even less films on scuba diving. I only found a few old instructional videos on specific sites such as the HSA website, and a few short instructional vides on YouTube.

Sue Austin’s film “We are Free Wheeling” displays one of the most visual disabled underwater diving performances. She is a British performance artist who is also a famous disabled scuba diver. She designed a wheelchair to go underwater and filmed her experiences. She was already a scuba diver but

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<sup>2</sup> <http://adventurescuba.ca/tom-schofield-earns-hsa-open-water-certification>

took the approach of showing us a different angle of the wheelchair, transforming what is usually seen as an anchor for disability and an object of pity into an object of beauty and grace. Sue Austin's website<sup>3</sup> hosts her videos and features "the world's first underwater wheelchair that flies along mid-water in a dramatic demonstration of the joy and freedom it brings." They are truly inspirational videos to make us ponder over about how we view disabilities. Sue made the first underwater wheelchair for the Paralympic Games in London, England in 2012.

"The Current<sup>4</sup>" is another full-length feature film made for release in 2015. "To be underwater, you're at peace with everything," said Jesse Murphree<sup>5</sup> who is the veteran in this movie who lost his legs and learnt to scuba dive. This movie is about individuals with disabilities and their sports such as surfing, scuba diving, free-diving, and ocean kayaking<sup>6</sup>.

Cody Unser is a disabled diver confined to a wheelchair since she was 12 years old. She made the movie "Cody Unser and Sea of Change" The Cody

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3 <http://www.wearefreewheeling.org.uk>

4 <http://www.padi.com/scuba/news-events/default.aspx?id=18913>

5 <http://kdvr.com/2014/02/16/documentary-the-current-explores-wounded-veterans-odyssey/>

6 <http://a1scuba.com/blog/category/disabled-diving/>

Unser First Step Foundation<sup>7</sup> (CUFSF) was formed to raise awareness for scuba divers in wheelchairs. The foundation has started very promising research into the findings that the first test group had sensations and feelings in their otherwise 'dead' limbs and that they became stronger. It is suggested that it may be the incrustrated nitrogen levels at depth, or the lack of compactness on the spine itself.

The HSA has limited videos on diving and there is one on their YouTube video channel<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cufsf.org/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruXr53xoPIw> (HSA)

## 2. A New Model of Disability

I started my research to try and find out why a sport like scuba diving, generally defined as a very athletic sport, would appeal to people with disabilities. This I did to get some kind of understanding of how they feel, and to get a broader comprehension of disabilities. To increase my understanding I sought more information on what research had been done before<sup>9,10</sup>. Michael Oliver in his book 'Understanding Disability,' states that people who have a disability are the best people to talk about having a disability the same way a man cannot talk about what it is like to be a woman (Oliver, 1990).

In this section, I discuss the Medical and Social models of disability and propose an Inclusive Model.

### 2.1. The Medical Model

Disability classified as an illness to be classified and 'fixed'.

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9 <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/disabilitiesbib.html>

10 <https://mubi.com/lists/disability-in-film>

I am intrigued by the idea that people labelled as disabled are perceived as sick. A model represents a particular way of ordering and structuring knowledge and allows for us to compartmentalize something, label it and dehumanize it. Resources can then be targeted towards a person with this label, to enable them to fit into the environment and conform to the world around them.

This notion of a medical model of categorization, came about when the medical profession grouped people with disabilities for their ease of general diagnosis. The medical model of disability is often cited as the basis of an unintended social degradation of disabled people. We have all been sick in our lives and needed care, but it does not mean we are classed as having a disability. The medical model views disability as a problem of the person that is directly caused by a health condition which, therefore, needs fixing or curing (Langtree, 2010).

Mason identifies the medical model as "oppressing all people, both disabled and non disabled, making both classifications uncomfortable talking about disabilities" (Rieser & Mason 1992, p.78). What language should we use? What is offensive? What are the right words?

The medical model is seen as fact, and it is "considered common sense to regard impairment as misfortune" (Cameron, 2014.) This restricts the life



opportunities of people with disabilities, as well as their range of experiences and roles, thereby restricting their choice to what is available or convenient to others.

## 2.2.The Social Model

Disability as a social problem caused by the way we organize our communities.

When we discount the medical model, the question that naturally arises is - if people with disabilities are not ill, why can't they fully participate in society and sporting activities as regularly as they want and in the manner they want? The social model of disability believes that disability is the result of barriers constructed by the society. In her essay titled 'Including all of our lives: Renewing the social model of disability,' noted disability theorist Liz Crow states that, "The social model of disability has been our key to dismantling the traditional conception of impairment as 'personal tragedy' and the oppression that this creates." (1996, p.58).

As an extension of the social model, the media portrays people with disabilities who choose to participate in sports, as superhuman and elite athletes, when most just want to participate in a sport like fully able people do. This is referred to as the "Supercrip" model (Hardin & Hardin, 2004). The ath-

lete is seen as a "hero" for "overcoming" their disability and accomplishing something incredible (Hargreaves & Hardin, 2009). This model is supposed to add encouragement and add emotional engagement in sporting activities, but it only seems, in my opinion, to make disabled athletes more of a letdown to society when they are just normal people wanting to go about their lives doing a sport in a regular way like everyone else does. Not all of us want to be superhuman athletes and of course it is unreasonable to expect that - as is quite often said to help you feel more in perspective with a perceived failure - "you can't be good at everything." Dave Allen the Irish comedian used to say, "Am I the Irish comedian with half a finger? No, I'm the Irish comedian with nine and a half fingers."

### 2.3. Proposed Inclusive Model

We should look at the environment and think that maybe it should be fixed to be more inclusive for all, rather than the reverse.

In the previous two sections, we saw how the social model claims that disability in our society is caused by the way society is organized, rather than by a person's difference. It purposes looking at ways of changing barriers that restrict life choices. In contrast, the medical model looks at what is 'wrong' with the person and how can it be 'fixed.'

We are all the same so `providing a barrier free environment is likely to benefit not just those with a mobility impairment but other groups as well, referred to as a curb cut effect (e.g. mothers with prams and pushchairs, porters with trolleys)" (Oliver, 2009)

We should turn around the current thinking and "instead of asking '*Are your difficulties in understanding people mainly due to a hearing problem*' ask '*Are your difficulties in understanding people mainly due to their inability to communicate with you?*'" (Oliver, 1990)

## 2.4. Alienation and why it is important to fit in

I feel we are social beings and people can sometimes be rather cruel to those who are perceived differently. As we walk along the line of discovery in life and face adversities and, if lucky, tests of your character, the realization at some point must come that no one can judge anyone else as none of us know what is took to get us to where we are. We feel insecure so need to fit in to enable us to blend and gather the strength of the pack. One of the reasons skunks are so successful with their smell-altering chemicals is that when an animal like a dog gets its smell so terribly altered, the rest of the pack do not recognize the dog so it become alienated and will probably die without the protection the pack provides.

I love diving and feel diving is an inclusive sport as we all fit in, we are all divers under the water all just hanging out with the aquatic creatures and sights; a pack looking out for each other to ensure we all come back from our adventure alive and intact.

We, as an evolved society should look after all our members of society. It was Mahatma Gandhi who said, "A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members." We should all look out for each other and make sure none are alienated and our individual worth is valued.

### 3. Practice Based Research

The method I used was practice based research - a record of a dive with Tom as a participant observer on video - and I also utilized a field diary. I did two interviews which triangulated the video and fieldwork diary, one immediately after the dive to capture reactions and one later in Toronto to capture more considered reflections on the same dive.

Practice based research is where the contribution to the knowledge is demonstrated through creative outcomes (Candy, 2006) as in the creative artifact associated with this document, my documentary film, which plays a vital part in understanding my research project. Practice based research is a method to bring understanding of the research question through an actual activity rather than just written work. It has an equally important piece of work that is visual, creative and based on actual practice of the activity, in my case a video of scuba diving by way of the practice. My research film tries to bring out enhanced knowledge of the process of diving with people with disabilities, which is done more effectively with the use of a visual media, than could be done solely using the written word. The resulting knowledge is embodied in the artifact, which, in this case, is my film.

Practice based projects are those that include as an integral part the production of an original artifact in addition to, or perhaps instead of, the production of a written thesis (Briggs, 2000). I practiced scuba diving and film making to research different ways of presenting the message that I wanted to convey. A film is the best way to see and experience scuba diving with disabilities.

I also used a field diary to note down activities and detailed descriptions of what occurred during the filming and afterwards. This enabled me to refer back and more clearly recall the events during filming and the subsequent interview with Tom in Toronto. The field diary was an invaluable reference that I started as soon as I could after the dive to accurately remember the events and how I felt. This helped me in critically reflecting over the experience.

## 4. Making of the Film

I filmed a dive with Tom Schofield and his Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) crew both above and under the water at the Niagara scuba Park in Ontario. I made three versions of the film before moving onto a final cut with minor alterations. I used Final Cut Pro as my editing software on a MacBook Air and iMac. The above water footage was shot on a Digital Rebel T2i and the underwater with two GoPro's; one a Hero 3 and the other a Hero3+.

The footage in total was about seven hours, which was edited down to twelve minutes taking one hundred and twenty two hours of editing time.

### 4.1. The First Pass - Chronological

Initially I had decided that we would go in chronological order and tell the tale from start to finish as it happened. After reviewing the footage it was decided that, although this was a good idea, it was not very exciting. I made a short two-minute movie in this chronological format and showed it to random members of my social circle and lost their interest quite quickly. Notable interest points were the actual pushing in of Tom into the water, the preparation, and visual underwater shots.

Next I prepared a more interesting movie to show to Tom for his feedback and reactions.

I observed that:

1. Attention span is very small so the film has to be around 10 minutes maximum.
2. The maximum time of a clip in other videos and documentaries is six seconds.
3. Attention will wander after about two seconds; so clips, unless necessary, should aim to be shorter than three seconds.
4. Different angles of the same footage are interesting.
5. Transitions make things smoother and more cohesive.
6. Things I find fascinating are not things others find fascinating.

#### 4.2.The Second Pass - Dramatic Start

This time I decided to mix the order up a little bit more and start with the most dramatic thing that happened which was Tom overheating and passing out. George, the above water cameraman, captured this all on film. This unfortunate incident occurred because we were an hour late starting our dive



due to a miscommunication regarding who was picking up Tom's specialized equipment. This resulted in a delay for the start of the dive by about an hour. It was a valuable learning experience for us all - knowing it can happen is very different than being present when it does happen and we all learnt valuable lessons from this including how to bring Tom back to a comfortable temperature and hydrated. It was a very quick occurrence and equally quickly dealt with and rectified.

The rest of the film was more chronological but with more angles and some transitions and the start of the narrative.

Tom visited Toronto and I showed this shortened version of the movie to him as I had promised. I recorded our session together watching the film, and later included some of that footage.

There were a couple of things I wanted to make sure he was OK with:

- The dramatic part where he passed out
- Trailing weeds on his legs as our weighting was not quite right - lots of trial and error involved in getting perfect trim.

I observed that:

1. Tom was OK with the drama and mentioned the trailing weeds but was not concerned about them. I was happy to keep them in as it happens to us all on our equipment and I did not want to show special treatment or make the movie unrealistic.

2. Tom was happy with the movie but seems a little shy about talking about it.

3. I observed he seemed quite emotional at times when watching the short clip of the diving, especially when recalling the accident.

4. After the movie Tom was extremely comfortable talking about his life and experience about the diving accident.

5. We got footage of Tom coming out of his van and he was very relaxed at this point, with George who was the cameraman, and myself.

6. A good product comes from active discussions with differing view points about what is important and what is not.

### 4.3. The Third Pass – Almost there

Dramatic start was well received by my family who I used as my primary audience. The rest of the film was more chronological but with more angles and some transitions and the start of the narrative. I decided to use

some of the more spectacular footage. As an example, people's reaction to Tom actually being pushed in; that seemed shocking to people. I incorporated narrative by text and voiceover, depending upon the situation, as both seem to work well.

The film was, at this stage, completed apart from some very specific changes like titles, wording, and then, close captioning.

The film was uploaded on Vimeo and sent to Tom Schofield for his comments and feedback.

#### 4.4. The Fourth Pass - Edit Request

When Tom saw this cut of the full movie, he sent me an email asking me to remove the initial overheating portion of the film. He did not give a reason. I felt it was important to keep it in even just by way of a verbal reference, but agreed to edit it so that it became background footage with explanations, not foreground footage. I felt it is important for a couple of reasons. The main reason was that it is reality and something that could happen - we are trained to overcome this as part of our HSA diver training and as a researcher it was an important observation. The other reason is that this is a documentary film and this incident actually happened. Documentaries capture reality, while movies invent reality. We had never witnessed overheating first hand, therefore it was a great learning experience and important as it

would help other dive crews avoid such situations. When it happened, we were concerned that Tom might end up unwell or unable to dive. We quickly got him water to drink and water to put down his suit to cool him down. However important it seemed to us, at Tom's request, it was removed.

#### 4.5. The Fifth Pass - The Final Cut

I sent the link to the movie to the other participants to ensure they were in agreement with the contents of the movie. I received positive affirmation from the HSA dive team: Tom (our diver), Nestor (lead dive master), Marilyn and David (both surface support).

During the course of my diving career I have spoken with other disabled divers and found their reasons for diving to be the same reasons as mine. I was also able to confirm that my conversations with Tom were representative of views held by other HSA divers. To correlate my finding, I present here some observations from personal correspondence I had with expert scuba divers Diane Morrell and Barry McMahon. I asked them some pointed questions to which they each responded candidly. My questions and their answers are given below.

Q1: Do people look at you differently when they know that you are a diver?

“Absolutely! It is earned respect. The coolest thing is when you get on a dive boat for the first time on a trip with non-disabled divers, you can see them watching you carefully from the corner of their eye and you can tell they are thinking, “Now how’s that gonna work?” Mostly by the time you get back on the boat after a dive, they are no longer seeing a person with a disability, they are seeing a fellow diver.”

(Dianne Morrell, personal communication, October 16, 2014)

“I have many motivations to dive. I love the adventure of each dive, being in a foreign environment, discovering and observing wildlife in their habitat. In many ways it is supernatural to be visiting the underwater world and seeing first hand part of our world that many will never see. It never fails to fascinate me.

Scuba diving is physically very therapeutic because it allows the absolute freedom of motion that is otherwise unavailable to the body. It’s the closest thing to a full body workout that I can do. The positive physical benefits are instant and lasting for several days following.

Having had a physical disability since childhood, this sport was not even on my radar. Fortunately I live close to an HSA training facility so the possibility of trying the experience was offered and I was instantly hooked.”

(Barry McMahon, personal communication, October 16, 2014)

Q2: Do you see any advantages to being underwater?

“I am described as quadriplegic and spend all day every day using a power wheelchair. Underwater is a gravity free zone thereby allowing all kinds of freedom to move limbs. This activity significantly alleviates my usual level of pain, and joint stiffness. The breathing control that I must use for maintaining buoyancy results in a mellow calm after the dive – kind of like intense prayer.”

(Dianne Morrell, personal communication, October 16, 2014)

“On land, I use a manual wheelchair, and am limited by my physical environment. Underwater, there are no limitations (except for currents in the water; I have limited ability to swim far or great distance if currents are a bit strong).”

(Barry McMahon, personal communication, October 14, 2014)

Q3: How does being a diver impact your social life?

“Increased my social life in huge ways. Not only do I have a larger circle of friends now (dive friends with and without disabilities), it is a sport that earns you respect in social circles (most times). I will say though, that I’m pretty sure some people who have not seen me dive, think that I must be exaggerating.”

(Dianne Morrell, personal communication, October 16, 2014)

“The diving community is like a branch of my extended family tree. Over the years I have made many trips with the same group of divers with non-diver friends and family. The community is close and extremely loyal. I guess it has to do with the nature of dive training. There is a high level of trust.”

(Barry McMahon, personal communication, October 14, 2014)

Q4: Do you feel you have gained anything from being a diver?

“I have gained more self-confidence in my abilities under adrenalin inducing situations. I have also gained knowledge about the underwater world and the amazing complexities of creation.”

(Dianne Morrell, personal communication, October 16, 2014)

“I have gained so much self-confidence it is amazing. I now am not afraid to travel, as often travel is involved in dive trips (Caribbean), and that if I come across obstacles in travel, I have the insight and confidence to figure out solutions.”

(Barry McMahon, personal communication, October 14, 2014).

Q5: What have you learnt about yourself since becoming a diver?

“I have learned that there are many possible goals that can be attained by just figuring it out.”

(Dianne Morrell, personal communication, October 16, 2014)

“I am capable of so much more than I thought. I can deal with accessibility obstacles (non-accessible showers and non-accessible transportation) in the best way that I know how, even though sometimes it doesn't look 'pretty', but that I can do it. I also learned (or reinforced) that I am a fairly calm person.”

(Barry McMahon, personal communication, October 14, 2014)

These answers are very similar to those given by Tom in my film and also mirror how I feel about diving regarding the meditative effect, love of underwater and feeling of improved health upon completion of the dive. Diving has stretched my personal boundaries and given me confidence to do things I was not sure I could do and I was surprised that my experiences are the same as Tom's and the other HSA divers I have met.

## 5. Decrying the 'Supercrip'

It is very important to not show an athlete with a disability as a superhuman, as stated by Spirit Synott in her major research project at OCAD Uni-



versity, "people with disabilities have to be superhuman to be accepted." (Synott, 2011). The term has been coined as a 'Supercrip'. The terminology 'Supercrip' came from the media representing athletes with a disability as set apart by being somehow superhuman. "Disability advocates argue that the disabled hero model may be deeply moving for the able-bodied majority but is oppressive for those who are disabled." (Shapiro, 1993) There is a lot of pressure to be accepted and so to see people outrageously admired for their courage to participate in a sport when they have a disability, to label them as a 'Supercrip', effectively again sets them apart.

Disability should not be seen as a tragic limitation to be overcome. Presently many disabled people live in abject poverty and do not have enough food and drink, job opportunities or social interaction. This does not seem right in our current society, which is rather a decadent one. Imagine a world where we embrace the differences. Think how interesting it would be if we all learnt sign language - we could communicate in silence, we could talk properly underwater rather than with a few simple signs that could be misinterpreted, we could talk to others without having to translate one spoken language to another, we could talk to babies and monkeys who were taught sign language.

## 6. Wrapping up

Scuba diving allows a person with quadriplegia, like Tom Schofield, to be included into the community of divers with little accommodation. The obvious difficulties with Tom are that he can only use his arms for propelling himself through the water and needs assistance to get in and out of the water. I believe that when we are in the water, we are all equal in our pursuit of diving and, with some obvious differences, are to be treated the same underwater. I do not know what it is like to be in a wheelchair, so I am different from Tom, Dianne and Barry, but *underwater we all feel the same*.

Scuba diving is one of the sports that is inclusive in its nature because when we are underwater we are all doing the same thing. It is also generally considered an exciting and active sport but certainly one that can be participated in by anyone with a medical approval certificate, which we all have to have to enable to scuba dive. Although sometimes assistance is needed to get the diver with a disability ready, the sport turns around the idea that someone with a disability may need help - underwater we are bound by the buddy system and so we all need to have the help of others ready and available, within an arms length of each other. To avoid any undue adverse occur-

rences, we are all required to dive with a buddy to be ready to provide each other aid should anything go wrong. In this regard we all regard assistance and co-operation underwater and NEVER dive alone.

Scuba diving is therefore an inclusive sport and is something to be seriously considered as a community activity for divers and potential divers with quadriplegia. More research should be done on the social and medical impact of scuba diving on paraplegia as reported incidents of improvements in health seem to be worth further investigation along with socialization aspects. There are promising results posted on the John Hopkins Medicine website ('Depths of Sensation' February 1, 2014<sup>11</sup> and 'Scuba diving Improves Function of Body, Mind in Vets with Spinal Cord Injury' September 17, 2011<sup>12</sup>) and other health and medicine websites<sup>13</sup>. Disabled people can be in need of help from able bodied people in certain circumstances. In the case of Tom Schofield there is no way he could dive without the help of his crew of four able bodied people to get him ready, help him in the water and ensure that he gets returned home safe and happy.

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<sup>11</sup>[http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/publications/hopkins\\_medicine\\_magazine/archives/winter\\_2014/depths\\_of\\_sensation](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/publications/hopkins_medicine_magazine/archives/winter_2014/depths_of_sensation)

<sup>12</sup>[http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/scuba\\_diving\\_improves\\_function\\_of\\_body\\_mind\\_in\\_vets\\_with\\_spinal\\_cord\\_injury](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/scuba_diving_improves_function_of_body_mind_in_vets_with_spinal_cord_injury)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.futurity.org/scuba-aids-mind-body-of-paralyzed-vets/>

As a video/film can be more powerful than words in the case of showing someone what it is like to perform this activity, I hope my film will encourage more people to dive with disabled people and more people with disabilities to dive after seeing this film.

I believe that the research done in the film will bring about a greater understanding of how scuba diving with a disability increases self esteem, self knowledge and awareness of one's self for both diver and dive team changing how you see yourself and how others see you.

I would like to see more research on underwater therapies. The underwater world is larger than the above water world and provides a physically supportive and weightless environment. The water provides an environment where you can hang suspended with no pressure points on your body, a relatively similar environment to the idea of floating in space. There is little research about how therapies underwater can help in many regards, both physical and mental.

I hope this research will give rise to further exploration of the physical and social improvements scuba diving can bring to everyone inclusive of those with a disability.

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James Bond motion picture based on the book by Ian Fleming. MGM.

## Appendix A

### Accompanying material

The following accompanying material is available upon request from the OCAD University Library:

CD documentary Film entitled "Depth of me"

Anyone requesting the material may view it in the OCAD University Library or pay to have it copied for personal use.