



tech talk

*If you can meet with
Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two
impostors just the same...*

*Yours is the Earth and
everything that's in it...*

— Excerpts from the poem "If"
by Rudyard Kipling

Text by Matt Jevon
Photos by Andrey Bizyukin

In my time, I have been head coach and assistant coach to pro, semi-pro and national league rugby teams as well as the Irish women's team. I have been a sports psychologist and an advisor on performance and setting performance environments in rugby, golf, motorcycle racing, rally driving and many other professional and Olympic sports. I am now a technical diving instructor as well. Why the mini-CV? Well, I have seen a few things develop over that time, and I want to try and get some balance back.



ANDREY BIZYUKIN

Analysis & Reflection

As Learning Tools

Technology, especially if affordable, can go anywhere. Tiny camera digital video, for example, has made a fantastic difference to the work we can do as coaches, instructors and the development potential for athletes and students.

Skills development-wise, the quality and immediacy of feedback is astonishing. We can use programmes like Quintic and Dartfish for deeper movement analysis and to illustrate the points we as coaches or instructors want to make. Tactically or

technically, we can look at cue utilisation, pattern recognition, learning styles, etc. It is pretty incredible. The thing is, even with all these tools, we are only really doing half a job!

The same is all too often true in ana-

lysing other sports I have been involved in. When something goes wrong, we will spend hours on analysis, working out what the glitch or anomaly was, tackling the error chain, fixing the problem; and then, in the training session, change the behav-



ours or the participants until the problem and failure is eradicated or controlled. But... when we succeed or win, we go celebrate, chalk it up to great preparation, amazing talent, luck—whatever attribution we want to use. However, sure as eggs are eggs, we do not apply the same effort and detailed analysis to working out what went right, asking how we succeeded that time, what factors and behaviours should be repeated and practised until sec-

ond nature, or were we just lucky this time?

- Success is not final.
- Failure is not fatal.
- It is the courage to continue that counts.

The measure of success

The number of non-divers or recreational divers I meet who tell me they could not possibly consider

deep rebreather diving or cave diving—both of which I love—is amazing. They tell me I am brave, or sometimes they tell me I am stupid—who knows, they are both probably right. But, what gives me the courage to do those dives is knowing that I have been meticulously trained by the best instructors I could find. That I have practised and rehearsed the skills they imparted to me regularly. That I have analysed and reflected on every dive I have done, good or



ANDREY BIZYUKIN



Engage Smarter

With DAN Educational Resources

Your Go-To Resource for Dive Safety Information

We believe a smarter diver is a safer diver, so we want to arm you with the information needed to stay safe both in and out of the water. Available online and in print, DAN's Educational Resources address topics relevant to the new and experienced diver. Engage smarter, and join DAN in the goal of making every dive accident-free.

- Health & Diving Reference Library
- Online Incident Reporting and Case Summaries
- Medical FAQs and Information Line
- Social Media Channels
- Webinars, Safety Quizzes and Online Seminars

DAN.org



bad. I even have a custom-made logbook with specific space on the page where I can record things about where I need to improve.

So, what do I reflect on? There is the obvious dive executed versus plan, but that is really a success vs failure measure. All team back, fit and well. Again, that is the key success measure. No, there are more meaningful things to reflect on. Schon, who was a big researcher on reflective practice in coaching, suggests we should reflect in action and on action. Kabat-Zinn proposes we would be enhanced as coaches and people by practising mindfulness. Being aware of our thoughts and emotions here and now, in the present. So, reflection does not start after the dive or the event; it starts during the dive, by becoming aware and noting how we

feel and what we are thinking in the dive. Only then can we get greater value on our post-dive reflections or analysis. My preference is to use some simple cognitive behavioural techniques to enhance reflections in and on action, but it is worth exploring others. Cognitive behavioural approaches suit my own thinking style well.

Mindfulness

Specifically then, reflect on the thoughts, feelings and actions from the moment you started preparing for the dive, until the kit is washed and put away. Be mindful of what triggered these thoughts and feelings. Were there distractions? Breathtaking scenery, amazing cave formations, slight kit issues, discomfort, etc. Were there things you did that enhanced your connection to the dive, the

sense of being aware and connected and fully in control? How did the behaviours and moods of others around you impact upon you? How was your preparation in the previous 24 hours, including sleep, travel, diet, hydration, mental imagery of the dive, planning and review, mission clarity, research on the conditions?

Luck

Account for and be honest about luck. If you exceeded the limits of training or experience, you were lucky. If you have not had the training to understand why, meaningful reflection will be hard. A few weeks ago, I was chatting with a very good diver who had just completed an extended range diving course with a 55m dive on air. The dive was done in the company of four other very experienced divers, including



two technical instructors to meet training standards and to provide the diver with the experience. They wanted to do another deep air dive for fun. I asked the usual questions about oxygen toxicity and narcosis, especially if there was stress, etc. The diver felt these were not issues to them. They wanted to save money on trimix. I asked about gas density issues. I was met with a blank look. Fair enough, I suppose—it is not really on the training agency curriculums until advanced trimix. The thing is, the diver did not know what



ANDREY BIZYUKIN

tekDIVE EUROPE



28 - 29 October 2017
Antwerp, Belgium

Ter Elst Congres Center
Kattenbroek 1, 2650 Edegem

TekDIVE is one of the largest technical diving shows in Europe, featuring guest speakers and exhibitors from all the major manufacturers and organisations. Renown experts will give presentations on all aspects of technical diving, cave diving, wreck diving, dive medicine and technical diving equipment.

DON'T MISS THIS EVENT!

Reserve your tickets now, contact:
Vic.verlinden@skynet.be
Stefpanis@hotmail.com

www.tekdive-europe.com



International Training and Certification



Sports Scuba Diving
Technical Diving

First-Aid & Medical Training

Professional & Occupational Diving



Higher Standards
Safer Training
More Theory
Lower Costs

Mail: gadmin@divetda.org
www.divetda.com

he did not know about all the risks of deep air diving, and pretty much based the risk assessment on oxygen toxicity and narcosis. He might enjoy a long diving career doing deep air dives and saving on helium costs for years, blissful in his ignorance. But for me, if he does 50 deep air dives without incident, he will have been very, very lucky.

Think not just of the what, but also the how and why. But please, invest as much time in the great dives, where all went perfectly, as in the dives where the whirly thing got hit by the soft and smelly.

A safe and awesome dive is never achieved in a day. Nor will 5,000 dives be any guarantee, unless they have been meaningful dives and you have reflected on and learnt from each one. Every dive has something to teach us and the positive lessons are more fun than the negative, more enjoyable to analyse and reflect on, and will reinforce great thoughts, habits and feelings that will make diving more fun and much safer. ■

A native of the Republic of Ireland, Matt Jevon, MSc., is an experienced and passionate open and closed circuit 100m trimix diver and full cave diver.

Whether using backmount, sidemount or his favourite JJ-CCR rebreather, Jevon believes technical diving is all about being safe, having an awesome dive and enjoying experiences few people share. Jevon holds instructor qualifications from TDI, PADI TECREC and IANTD, and partly owns South West Tech—a TDI dive centre in Ireland. Jevon is also an approved JJ-CCR instructor and dealer. In addition, he is a sports psychologist, senior rugby coach and works in strategy and private equity. For more information, please visit: Swf.ie and Mattjevon.com.