



## Scuba Diving Green in BKLYN Style



Many years ago in another lifetime (or so it seems now), I was a scuba diver...

At the time, I worked in a local dive shop, had mastered my Advanced Open Water SCUBA Certification & was planning on doing the same as a Dive Master & Instructor. I'd begun diving after my stepfather's death as a tribute to him. He was one of my biggest cheerleaders -.

insisting there was nothing I couldn't do - & scuba diving is something I think he'd have loved me to experience especially since it was the kind of thing I'd never thought I'd get to do. It was magical! The sensation of flying was amazing. And to fly completely supported with the power & gentleness of water, surrounded by amazing quiet & extraordinary beauty was incredible. Diving is one of the most significant experiences of my life.

At that time I was also acting, ended up accepting a number of amazing roles & drifted away from the dive shop & the water... And now, landlocked in Brooklyn, my dives are few & far between... That's okay. It doesn't mean diving won't be a part of my life again but for now my dream of providing a convenient & easy way for people to go greener (at Green in BKLYN, of course!) takes precedence.

And so I began looking for a new home for my dive equipment. Actually, my lovely intern, Cristina, researched our green options & found a way to reduce, reuse & recycle it all... And today, I've packed up my dive kit (BC, regulators, computer, wetsuit, fins, etc.) & will be shipping it out to the **Diveheart Foundation!**

Diveheart provides & supports educational SCUBA & snorkeling programs for children, adults & veterans with disabilities with the hope of providing physical & psychological therapeutic value. It's the "CAN DO" spirit that Diveheart hopes to instill in all its participants - by giving them confidence & independence to face life challenges & overcome barriers that might seem insurmountable.

Through SCUBA diving, the Diveheart Foundation supports & facilitates programs that teach children & adults with disabilities to fly in the forgiving weightlessness of water... giving perfect buoyancy to a child or adult who would otherwise struggle on land.

In the wake of my stepfather's death, that perfect buoyancy offered extraordinary healing powers to me. I can't imagine the effect it has on someone who's unable to see, walk or use their hands. But I think the letter below from one of Diveheart's participants gives us a hint.

*Just wanted to send you a note... I loved getting to explore the quarry. That was so much fun. I never knew I was an adrenaline junkie till I started diving. I love the adrenaline rush as you hit the water. I know now why they call it Diveheart because the dives go straight to the heart & so do the people you make the dives with! My thoughts & emotions are still all over the board as far as the trip is concerned but one thing is for sure - I will NEVER be able to THANK YOU enough for the way you made me feel that week!*

*Diving has helped me to be freed from a body I thought I was trapped in. I remember never feeling scared because I knew you were down there waiting for your mermaid to join you on another adventure of the underwater world as they pushed me off the back of the boat. In a world of lots of "can't" you helped me discover a huge CAN.*

*The things you see 20 some feet below the surface is amazing. There's a whole new world down there. I never knew I had gills... I must have been a mermaid in an other life.*

*I can't wait till the 7th to get back in my natural environment. Thank you for setting me FREE & teaching me to FLY. I found my wings because of you. The memories will stick with me FOREVER... From YOUR LITTLE MERMAID CHILD.*

To my dive instructors & dive buddies, the volunteers & participants of the **Diveheart Foundation** & my stepfather, thank you for all you've done to support the wings of so many people's dreams - both in & out of the water!