

Survival Kits; Shipwreck

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So where's the best place to be when the ship sinks?

The best place to be is on the first deck. That is the first deck that's going to hit the water and it would give you a better chance to get away from the ship, so that the suction wouldn't draw you down with the ship.

Hmm. I think your Dad's about right there.

What should I do to prepare for that?

Well obviously you'd put a lifebelt on and make sure you've got some method of attracting attention on your lifebelt; a light of some description. Make sure you've got a whistle or something like that, that you could blow so that when you were in the water people would be able to find you - because, if the waves are such that you could be in the water and the waves could hide you - whereas if you had a whistle or some form of attraction it could draw a lifeboat towards you or something like that.

And is there anything in particular I should look out for on the way down, as the
Sharks!

Yea. It all depends on what type of water you're in. If you're in the tropics, obviously same as your Mother says, there's a possibility that anybody that's hurt and bleeding would attract sharks. So, probably another thing that you'd probably want to carry was some form of shark repellent: A dye or some form of repellent that would keep them away. Make sure you're well away from the ship, when it goes down, so that, as I say, you're not drawn underneath it by the suction.

If there's anything at all there that you could hang on to, to keep you afloat, any drifting stuff, anything at all that you could cling on to.

Any debris that's been washed off the ship, that's floating. It doesn't matter what it is really, as long as it's afloat and as long as it's buoyant enough to keep you afloat. If possible try and find something which could support your weight so that you could get out of the water, get on to something. Whether it be a raft or a table or anything that's floating about.

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The chances are I'm going to be floating around for quite some time, so what am I going to need to eat and drink, what should I take with me to eat and drink?

Well, you mean possessions that you can carry? If possible you could try and take something to drink...

probably a flask with a drop of brandy in .

...or a soft drink.

Chocolate. Chocolate's got energy in, got sugar in for energy to keep you.

How much?

I should say it depends on what you could carry safely without actually causing you being overweight. The thing you float on is going to be still floatable when you get on it with whatever you're carrying. So, you'd have to think to yourself, "well, the minimum amount and the maximum amount" you'd have to think in two ways of, "well the minimum amount is so much, and maximum amount is so much. So I can't take more than that, but I can't take less than that", for survival.

But, you couldn't give me any figures?

Well, not really because you don't know whether you are going to be just in the water yourself, whether you are going to get a lift of some form. If you're in the water yourself with just your lifebelt then your chances of survival are very slim, because eventually (without you get picked up) you're going to drown.

Is there any way of me getting food and drink once my supplies have ran out?

Well, the only thing, if you are on something that's floatable, there's every chance that flying fish might land on it or you may be able to coax down some form of bird. With the food that you've got you've got to be very careful that you make sure you're not going to waste it.

How would I catch them?

If you manage to take some form of line with you, and even if possible fish hooks (which I doubt very much you'd have time to find, without you've got them in your kit ready, without you've prepared for this).

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So that would be part of my survival kit, fish hooks?

Yes. Make sure that if you were looking at a survival kit before you went on board you would need fish hooks You would need a line. You would need some type of lure to attract the fish. You would need some bowl of some description to catch water if it did rain.

How else could I get water?

Well, if you could use perhaps some of your clothing or something like that to act as a catchment if it rains,

There's no way you'd use the sea water

if it doesn't there's no way really other than perhaps if you got a dew in the morning or something like that, an early dew, and you could collect it on a rag and then wring that out which would supply you with a drop of very little water but it might be enough to survive.

Is it worth packing something for catching it in?

Yes, like a sponge or something like that which would collect water for you. But there again the amount you'd be able to collect would be very little.

Or a plastic cup. Something that was lightweight.

But there again it might be just enough to, what you're talking about, to survive.

Will I have to cook the things that I'm catching?

No. Definitely not. There's no way as you could try and think of cooking anything. Dry it, yes by all means. Sundried stuff, if you can dry it and in that way you can use it then as a dried type of meal. And even if it come to the real push,

Crunch.

if you could catch a bird, you could actually drink the blood from the bird which would...

give you strength.

...be a liquid as well as a nutriment. But these are survival things. You can't take these things with you. You can only take with you the means to catch this.

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What about all this stuff that I am taking with me as a kit. How am I going to carry it all?

Well, if you're taking fishhooks, line and lures it would take up very little room. You could carry it in your pocket quite easily.

Yes, or a body pouch.

Or a body belt as you could carry it in. As I say, you're going to be wearing a lifebelt, obviously. Now, before the ship actually started to go down, if you put on as much clothing as you could, because you would need that, because if you were in the tropics especially, the sun is going to do more damage to you than anything. So if you could take some form of hat or some head covering whether it be an old shirt or whatever it may be, it'd be something to stop the sun actually taking out the fluid from your body, drying the fluids out.

Where am I going to sleep?

If you've got a board what you're probably as well have to try and think of to take is probably a piece of rope which you could tie yourself to the board. Because if you slept and you rolled off you would drown, obviously, because the chances of getting back on that would be very remote because of the floating - so you would have to take something and be prepared to tie yourself on to it.

And how am I going to keep warm and dry?

Well because this extra clothing you've got with you...

Is that going to keep me dry as well?

Well it'd have to do wouldn't it? You could probably try and take with you a very light weight plastic mac which you could wear over the top of everything so that, that what you'd got on would be dry. And then if it did get wet, during the day you could perhaps dry it out by actually, if you like, holding it up or anything. Try and find some method of drying your stuff out so that you're keeping yourself rather dry.

You're taking it for granted he's on a raft though. If you're just in the water there's no way you can keep dry.

Just in the water it's just a matter of keeping afloat as long as you can, making as much noise as you can, to attract attention. Other than that, there's nothing.

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At the last resort you'd have to think about your prayers.

You would have to make as much noise as you could, shout as loud as you could, blow a whistle, if you'd got a gas siren. You could probably carry one of them with you.

Is that something worth packing then?

Well I should say so, yes because these gas sirens, you can hear them from about well over a mile away, which is what you would want because if you were in the water there's every possibility that there would be lifeboats in the water and if they heard the sound they would do the best to pick you up, but, of course, you'd have to draw attention to yourself where you were. If you didn't do that....

If there isn't anything about how am I going to get home and how am I going to know where I am?

Another little thing you'd have to carry with you is probably a compass - although I can't see it being much use to you, in the middle of the ocean. All as that compass would tell you is where North is, where South is, where East is and where West is. What area you'd be travelling in I don't know. Without when you got on the boat you got some form of route, on a piece of paper (the route the ship was taking), and before the ship went down if you could try and find out where exactly you were.

It wouldn't really matter because if you were at sea like that however you're going you'd just drift where the drift takes you, where the wind takes you, the sea.

You wouldn't have much control over where you were going. You'd have to rely on the wind and the tides taking you.

So there's no special equipment I can pack that'll help me find out where I am and help me get home?

Not really.

Not without you manage to take a radio with you, short-wave radio with you. You could send out a signal on that which would be picked up by passing ships or something like that, but there again, a short-wave radio isn't something that's light. If you jump in the sea with it it's going to be no good anyway.

And also where would I get on of them from?

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The chances of you getting one of these are pretty remote.

You could perhaps take a small portable, battery radio with you which you could probably keep wrapped up in a piece of plastic. That would keep it dry so that when you did manage to get on your raft, if you were going to find one, you'd at least be able to switch that on to find out if there was any help coming or anything like that, if you could get hold of a near station or something.

More like a transistor radio?

Yes that's right, something like that. Then, you'd have to be very careful how you used it. You wouldn't have to put it on and forget, leave it on. You probably have to be very careful and perhaps only use it for half an hour a day because of your batteries.

Apart from what you've already said is there any other particular hazards that I should be aware of or look out for?

Rough seas: You can't do much about that. If the sea's got fairly rough you would have to try and keep as stable as you could, if you were on a raft. These rafts are made so that they will stay upright. There again you'd have to make sure that you were fastened on to it so that whatever seas you came across you would still be fastened on to it. Whether you'd be able to eat or sleep or that I don't know. That's just a matter of survival, what your constitution is.

What if I'm injured?

If you're injured you would probably take a few bandages with you, of some description, a little first aid kit perhaps as you could carry with you.

What would be in that?

Well, bandages,

Plaster.

plaster, iodine, something like that. I don't think you would need to worry about taking any of the drugs such as morphine or anything like that. It's all right if you've got morphine if you've got somebody there to look after you.

Of course, you don't want to be out of it do you.

You don't want to be out of it. It's no use giving yourself a morphine injection and then find yourself that you're going to be washed over the side.

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What about when it gets dark?

Well when it gets dark, this is what I say, you'd have a flasher on your lifebelt, attached to it already. That's like a little red light that flashes.

That's helping people see me but how do I see. How do I provide light for myself? What's the best means of doing that?

You wouldn't be able to provide light for yourself. I mean, you wouldn't need to would you. What would you need light for?

Mmm, I don't know, to eat?

No, because you'd eat during the daytime wouldn't you.

If you'd got anything left to eat.

At night time you'd be more concerned about if you fell asleep, being on the raft next morning when you woke up. Not about whether you could read a novel, or something like that. You wouldn't be interested in anything like that.

So I wouldn't be taking any books with me?

You're interested in survival.

Will I need any money?

No. You wouldn't need any money whatsoever because it's no good to you.

So there's no point in me grabbing my cash just before the ship sinks?

No, if you've got a money belt on you, with a bit of money in it, okay, fair enough - but I can't see it being any good to you in any case. Because if somebody picks you up they're not going to say "how much money have you got before I pick you up." It's a case of "well you're a shipwreck, so we pick you up. We don't ask you what your financial position is before we save you".

Well thanks, that should be really helpful.

Oops!