

I Love You, Man, but You're Going to Die.

by Joe Nesbitt



Hey dude, I just wanted to say I love you. I wanted to make sure you knew and that I told you very directly before you die. Because you are going to die.

I'm not trying to be a dick; it's just the truth. I've seen enough people like you die over the years to see what will happen before it actually does. I've called it many times before and I'm calling it with you. So consider this a pre-posthumous letter.

Your excitement is more than encouraging, it's downright contagious—which is awesome. I have a love-hate with new people getting into BASE jumping. It's scary because of the danger but seeing the thrill, the emotion, the love on someone else's face is at the very least motivating to get out and share some jumps together. It is a double-edged sword however and caution needs to be exercised with the same enthusiasm. You, my friend, are not showing enough caution.

What are you doing wrong? It's mostly your attitude—which is everything.

I've tried being lighthearted about it with you. Some jokes here and there about bad decisions or arguments you've made, hoping you would understand I was actually being completely serious. You didn't get it. I tried having serious but gentle talks with you about it. You were argumentative. I tried dropping the nice act and being very blunt about it. You got defensive and dismissive. Your attitude sucks and it's deadly.

I can't stress enough what a fucking critical time this is in your BASE career, because it's just that: a career. What you learn now will impact the rest of your time in the sport. I want you around for a long time and the only way that's going to happen is if you learn where the line is and how to walk it. Slow the fuck down, take your time, show some reserve. You don't have the experience, skills or knowledge to do the things many of your friends are doing right now. They got there after years and years of experience themselves. You're just not there yet but you can be and you will be ... eventually. This is the time in your career when you either develop good habits and decision-making skills or bad ones. If you start with bad habits and decision making now there is simply no hope for you down the road.

They say you learn more from your mistakes than your successes ... but mistakes in this sport cost a lot. Learn from others' mistakes whenever possible. Learn from mine, from your other friends, from mentors, from idiots you see in videos on the internet – just always be learning. I've made countless mistakes myself these past 10 years and I'm lucky to be alive with only a few injuries. Do you know how many of your friends have broken their backs doing this shit?

I love you man and I want you to stick around. I can help if you want it and we can do some truly rad shit together. I consider you a friend and my friends and I are known for doing epic shit together. Want to jump cliffs in board shorts and land on beautiful beaches? Easy. Want to huck buildings and land on top of other buildings? Done. Want to fly the crack with me? Yeah, we should definitely do that.

Want to end up dead? Me neither. So do me, yourself and everyone who loves you a favor, and think about what I said today. I'm not the only one out there tired of mourning dead friends. Which is why, if you're not going to listen to me, we can't be friends. I'm not going to put myself through the grief of watching someone else I love die in front of me despite my attempts to prevent it.

Love always,



-J



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Joe Nesbitt is an avid BASE jumper, skydiver and wingsuit pilot with a background in sales and marketing. He began his jumping career 10 years ago in Cincinnati. He currently resides in California and travels the world at every opportunity to jump in various locations.