

Sky Dive

Many of you people may be wondering "why do people do things like this? Are these people playing with a full deck? Are they living on the edge for some deranged reason?" I've asked that question to myself several times. Why do these people hurl themselves out of an aircraft that is between 3500 feet and 10000 feet above the ground and plunge towards the earth at up to 120 mph.

Being a curious individual, I tried it out myself to see what it was all about. Sure I had a few jitters but nothing was stopping me. After taking the required lessons and signing the release form we were jammed packed into the plane. If you have never been in a small plane before, chances are that you would have been more than willing to jump out. At an altitude of 3500 feet, seeing the door blast open on the plane was enough to make you or break you from going through with this. Then one after another we all took our turns stepping out of the plane. Then suddenly you are not standing on anything or looking over the edge of anything! There is absolutely nothing there between you and the ground, except for a small distance of 3200 feet. That parachute suddenly becomes your best friend in the whole world.

About four minutes later these skydivers start to land safely on the ground. Once you have landed, you look safely up to the sky and watch as your parachute falls and you yell, "YEE-HA!!! I just jumped out of a perfectly good airplane for no reasonable explanation" and to think, people pay money to do this stuff. Well about two weeks ago several brave Islanders had an opportunity of a lifetime to walk on that fine line. It started at a meeting at Holland Collage where males and females ranging in age from 18 to 60 years old came together in the lecture room. There were many questions and concerns, but the real question that was floating around the room was, "what is it really like?"

Then on September 12th to 14th at the Cable Head airport many gutsy Islanders took their lessons, signed their lives away, and parachuting for the first time. Some of those gifted individuals even go to this University.

I have spoken to many professional skydivers and asked them why they keep jumping. Many of them said that it is like smoking; it is very addictive and very hard to quit. One even mentioned that it is the next best thing to making love.

The majority of the people who skydive each year spend thousands of dollars to support their unusual habit. Instead of buying a nice car or a beautiful house, they will invest their money into the sport. Then there are the few who just do it as a pastime.

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