

# Paul de Gelder Biography



IMPROVISE...ADAPT...OVERCOME... These three words – a mantra Paul learned in the Australian Army as a young Paratrooper – resonated with him the first time he heard them. Paul de Gelder chased adventure wherever he could find it, from his wild ride as

a teen and his whirlwind lifestyle working in clubs and the music industry to hauling his way up to the elite echelons of the Australian Defence Forces as an Army paratrooper and then Navy bomb disposal diver.

In February 2009, Paul's adventurous life took a dramatic turn when a 10-foot bull shark attacked him during a routine Navy dive, severing his hand and leg. Rather than succumbing to despair, Paul channeled his indomitable spirit, fought through excruciating pain, and reclaimed his life. Drawing on everything his eventful life had taught him, Paul left nothing to chance, conducting his own rehabilitation. He fought through excruciating pain, smashing challenge after challenge whilst excellent the medical staff and the public with his will to succeed, and returned to full-time Navy service after only six months.

His journey from trauma to triumph is extraordinary, marked by resilience and determination. His inspiring story, vividly chronicled in his autobiography "Uncaged," takes "Never Say Die" to a new level.

In the years since the shark attack, Paul's life has changed in every aspect. Having left full-time Navy service in August 2012, after continuing to instruct Navy Divers for a further three years, Paul has traveled the world as a top motivational speaker, passionate environmentalist, adventurer, and mentor to school kids. He has spoken at venues across

the globe, from the United Nations in New York to conferences across the U.S., China, London, Vietnam, and New Zealand.

Paul has also been a guest on major TV talk shows and starred as a guest trainer twice on the Biggest Loser Australia. He has hosted over 25 documentaries for Discovery Channel's Shark Week, where he learned to hand-feed bull sharks, hammerheads, and blue sharks and dive with tiger sharks and even Great Whites without the protection of a cage. Megastar Will Smith featured Paul in his Facebook series "Bucket List" as his shark diving mentor, UFC Hall of Famer Ronda Rousey was taught how to hand-feed bull sharks by Paul, and most recently, Iron Mike Tyson became Paul's shark diving student. Paul also became part of an anti-poaching team in Africa to film the excellent work the Rangers did for FEARLESS, which aired on NatGeo.

Paul has been touted as one of the top 15 inspirational Australians and top 10 speakers, and now, based in Los Angeles, he is preparing to film yet more documentaries. Looking to expand his repertoire, Paul completed a lead acting role for a six-part miniseries for a major cable network and has since appeared in several commercials and short films.

An incredible life and an incredible story.