**🛑 “When It’s Time to Leave”**

*A Wake-Up Call for Aquatic Professionals Left Alone With the Risk*

You gave everything.

You taught kids how to float when no one had your back.
You solved problems no one saw coming.
You showed up with energy, ideas, and initiative — and were met with red tape, silence, and “we don’t have the budget for that.”

You kept showing up anyway. But maybe now, you’re asking yourself:

**At what cost?**

**💬 If You’ve Heard These Things from Management…**

* “We’re working on it.”
* “Let’s not overreact.”
* “We appreciate your concern, but we can’t prioritize that right now.”
* “We’ll bring it to the board.”
* “Can you just be flexible?”

But never:

✅ Budget approval
✅ Updated protocols
✅ Backup staff
✅ Training support
✅ Equipment replacements
✅ Mental health checks

…then you already know: they’re **not preparing you to lead. They’re preparing you to take the fall.**

**🚩 Red Flags You Can’t Keep Ignoring:**

* You're told to cut corners to meet staffing, programming, or revenue goals
* You're given **responsibility** but denied **authority** to make changes
* You’re “invited” to meetings where your voice is heard — but never followed
* You report safety concerns and are met with defensiveness, delay, or worse: silence
* You’re expected to stretch every dollar while still being held accountable for perfection

**⚠️ What Happens When Something Goes Wrong?**

They’ll say:
❌ “We didn’t know.”
❌ “They never told us.”
❌ “It wasn’t our decision — they ran that department.”

**And you’ll be the one named.**

**🧨 REAL-LIFE CASES — AND REAL CONSEQUENCES:**

**🔹 *Yoni Gottesman v. Cathedral Oaks Athletic Club***

A 4-year-old drowned. No safety protocols. No EAP. No trained staff.
**Aquatics Director was personally named in the $16+ million lawsuit.**
Source →

**🔹 *Waterbury Boys & Girls Club – $12.3M Verdict***

A child drowned under one inattentive lifeguard.
Leadership was held responsible for not training staff or creating a proper guard schedule.
Source →

**🔹 *Ramada Hotel Drownings (1993)***

Three children died. No lifeguards. No fencing.
**Facility managers and owners faced wrongful death lawsuits.**
Source →

**🔹 *Summer Camp Drowning – $16.2M Verdict***

Camp ignored staffing shortages, signage warnings, and training needs.
The jury made it clear: **cutting safety corners is not excusable.**
Source →

**🔹 *Belfast School Camp (Australia)***

One child drowned, another almost did. Parent concerns were ignored.
The organization was **criminally charged** and sued.
Source →

**💣 The Truth No One in Leadership Will Say:**

If they won’t give you what you need to keep people safe —
**they will absolutely throw you under the bus** when something goes wrong.

They will quote your job description.
They will dig up old shift reports.
They will say *“Well, it was their program. We trusted their judgment.”*

They will not protect you.

**🧠 You May Still Love Aquatics…**

But you don’t have to love being ignored.
You don’t have to accept working in **unsafe conditions** just because you’re passionate.
You don’t have to stay somewhere that praises your leadership — until it’s inconvenient.

**💡 So Ask Yourself:**

* If the worst happens, will anyone say they backed you?
* If something tragic occurs, are you protected or are you exposed?
* Are your warnings being documented — or deleted?
* Is your presence making the place safer… or just shielding leadership from accountability?

**✅ Your Choices Are Valid:**

🚪 You can leave.
🧱 You can build something better.
📚 You can educate others.
🛟 You can STILL serve aquatics — just not at your own expense.

**🗣️ Final Words**

You are not crazy. You are not overreacting.
You are not ungrateful for wanting support.
You are not unprofessional for refusing to drown quietly under red tape.

If they won’t fund it, fix it, or face it —
**you don’t have to stay and take the fall.**