

PART 7 – POST IMPACT

P7 T7 VLOG 7

The gauges are flashing different levels...fuel dropping, no, it's rising.

Speed...falling.... 75,000...22.... MIC? Status update?

Insufficient information. O2 at 20% Is there anything you need?

The lights are flickering. There has to be damage to the ship. We're tumbling. We're definitely off course. I've checked the sensors, speed gauges...everything is flashing different readings. The others are all over the place too. The fuel gauge is reading one third then almost full then back to a third again. I can't trust anything!

Blabbit...bahara...monet...supreme...volume...override...override

No! MIC! What does that mean? Don't you break down on me now!

Blebbit

I have to sort this alone. MIC is giving the wrong information. I can't even make out what he's saying.

I'm switching to manual. I press to select. Confirm. Blebbewwwww.....

The lights are still flickering. I can't stop shaking.

Think. Come on, Tazz. De-pressurisation? OK, so how will I know?

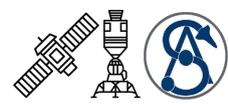
Check each window? I can't see the sides of the ship. What can I do to make things better? No point worrying about damage. I wish I knew, but I'm not going to know. Just a second, if we were really depressurising, things would be sucked towards the source. And I'd have about 10 seconds to live...which is already up.

My pulse is racing. I'm sweating. I don't know if I'm cold or hot. Calm down. Think of the next step. Breathe.....

I have to sort out the rolling, get back on course. It's risky if one side of the spaceship stays too long in glare of the sun. I'll have to do a controlled burn to get back on my flight path. How do I know which are the correct readouts?

I'm shuddering. If the air con fans stopped working, does that mean there isn't enough fuel to power the ship? And what about the fans? CO2 suffocation?

Eliminate unhelpful thoughts. Stop worrying about the fuel. Do the things you can do.



I've been thinking for half an hour. I've been studying the flight manual.

The temperature must have been falling. We have reached the dew point of the air. The instrument panels are dotted with beads of water. I'm soaking it away in a towel. Some of the ship's vital functions have broken down or they are only operating at a minimum level. Or the readings are just wrong. Maybe the only problem is the electronics.

Think!

There's a procedure for manual operation. I've tried it and it's not working.

So, I can work it out myself. I've had all the training. OK, first I have to sort out the attitude. That's the direction we point in relation to the sun. I have to get this ship back on track. I'll use the periscope.... that hasn't failed me so far...the sun sensors, the star trackers, the magnetic sensors...and if I set the correct angle in relation to the Earth's horizon. I lift flaps. Press Confirm. Yes, this is what I want to do, what I have to do. I study the flight attitude indicator...it's a little dome in front of me crisscrossed with angle markings.... correcting my position...slowly...slowly...lined up.

One of my trainers at the British Space Centre said that getting the correct manual angles for a ship's re-entry is like aiming to post a letter through a letterbox from four miles away. If I come in too steep, I'll burn up.

Too shallow, I spin away from Earth entirely.

Just.... spinning, forever and ever.....