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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## News Report

### Survival

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On 26 December 2004, a huge earthquake off the coast of Indonesia **triggered** a **devastating** tsunami. More than 230,000 people were killed and millions more rendered homeless.

From the devastation there were stories of survival. For many it was just **good fortune** that they found themselves in a situation where they were able to escape the danger.

Kay Howells was staying on the island of Koh Phi Phi. She and her partner were taking a **snorkelling** trip when the tsunami struck.

They were in the water when the Thai guides started to call everyone back onto the boats. **Water was receding rapidly** from the shoreline, a **tell-tale sign** of a tsunami approaching.

They were able to get back on to their boat before it had to move to a safer position away from the shore. From their **vantage point** they saw waves hitting the beach, boats being destroyed and people being **swept away**. They didn't know what happened to the other people on their trip.

At first they thought it was **an isolated incident** but they soon learned that a vast area was affected. Their hotel on the island was destroyed and over half the people staying there were killed.

Kay was deeply affected by the tragedy of what happened that day.

Every year on the anniversary of the tsunami she takes a walk on the beach with her partner to reflect on that devastating day and their survival.

## **Vocabulary**

### **triggered**

caused

### **devastating**

causing a lot of damage and destruction

### **good fortune**

good luck

### **snorkelling**

activity in which people swim underwater using a special tube to breathe

### **water was receding rapidly**

the edge of the sea was moving quickly away from the beach

### **a tell-tale sign**

a well-known signal of something

### **vantage point**

place from where you have a view of something

### **swept away**

taken by the water out to sea

### **an isolated incident**

something that has happened in only one place or a small area

This story is based on an original BBC News story:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/30462238>