



# ... this is **not** how we teach **swimming** in Faroese schools!

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Hey

Helgi

Bára





Greenland

Norwegian Sea



Iceland

Reykjavik



Norway

Sweden

Finland

Gulf of Bothnia

St Petersburg  
САНКТ-ПЕТЕР

Estonia

Latvia

Lithuania

Bel

Baltic Sea

Stockholm

Oslo

North Sea

Denmark

Poland

Warsaw

Berlin

Netherlands

Germany

Czechia

Slovakia

Ireland

Dublin

United Kingdom



Iceland

Reykjavik

Faroe Islands

54.679

Norway



A nerd with interest for spineless snails

**DAGUR & VIKI**

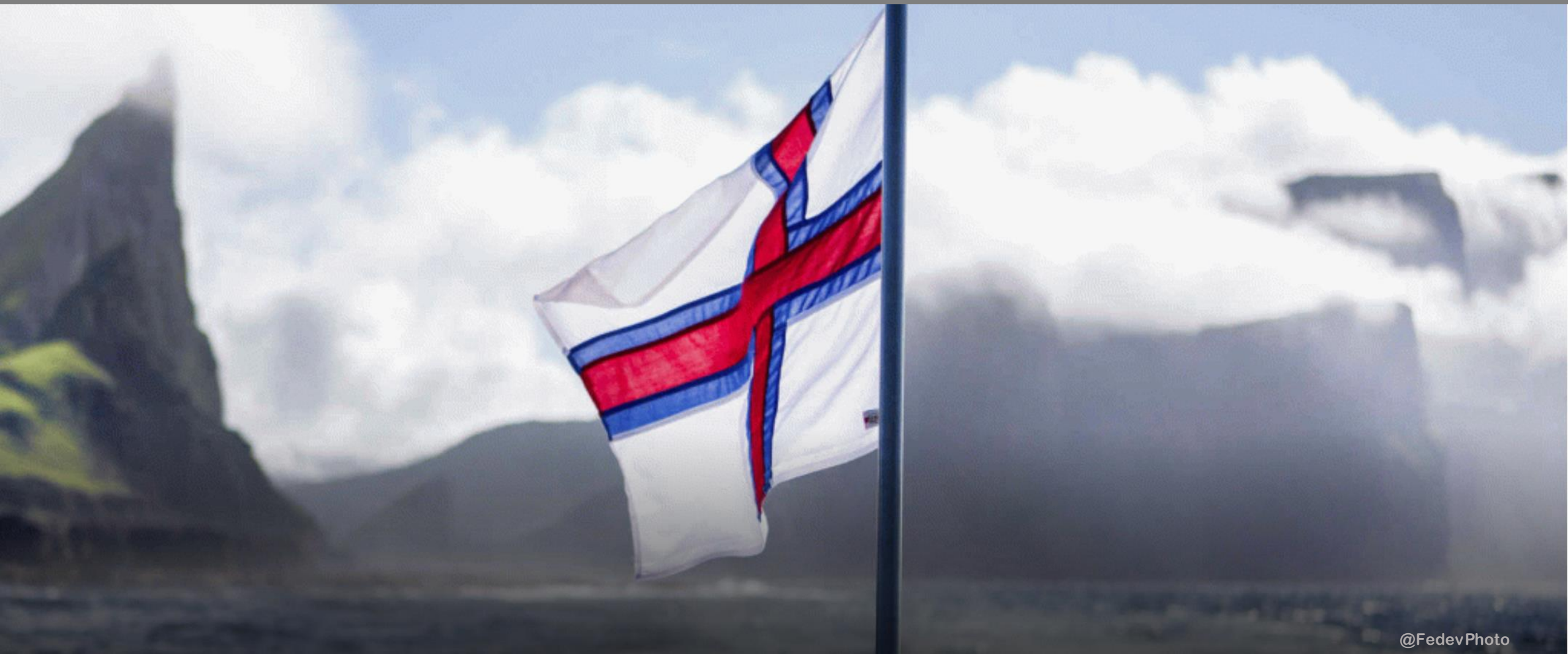
**HELGI WINTHER OLSEN**

nørdur við áhuga fyrir ryggleysum sniglum



Fascination  
Curiosity  
Drive





@FedevPhoto



So, what is  
**swimming** in  
Faroese schools?

... this is **not** how  
we teach **swimming**  
in the Faroese  
schools!



# National curriculum

## Swimming

The core area of swimming includes **the skills to swim**, to strengthen the student's ability to swim. This core area also includes information on **training** and **swimming-related hazards**, such as **basic lifesaving** techniques and **first aid**.

The pupil should be able to:

### Grade 1-2

7-8 yr

- **water safety** and **self-saving**
- to take the **swimming** test in **Nósi**, where possible

### Grade 3-4

7-8 yr

- to point out and explain about various **rescue methods** and **first aid**
- and knows different ways to **save themselves**.

### Grade 5-6

11-12 yr

- or knows **rescue/self-rescue techniques**
- or knows **how to help** if and **accident occurs without endangering themselves**
- **breaststroke, crawl, backcrawl, self-rescue swimming, saving a tired swimmer**.

### Grade 7-9

13-15 yr

- to **act and behave safely in water and afloat** (á floti!).

### Grade 10

16 yr

- to further develop their skills from previous levels.

# Why should we learn **to swim** in the Faroe Islands?

# National curriculum

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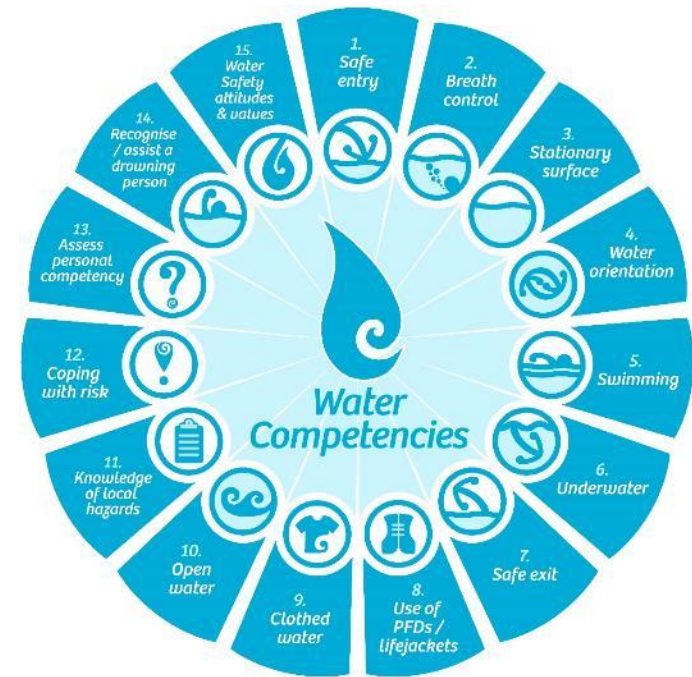
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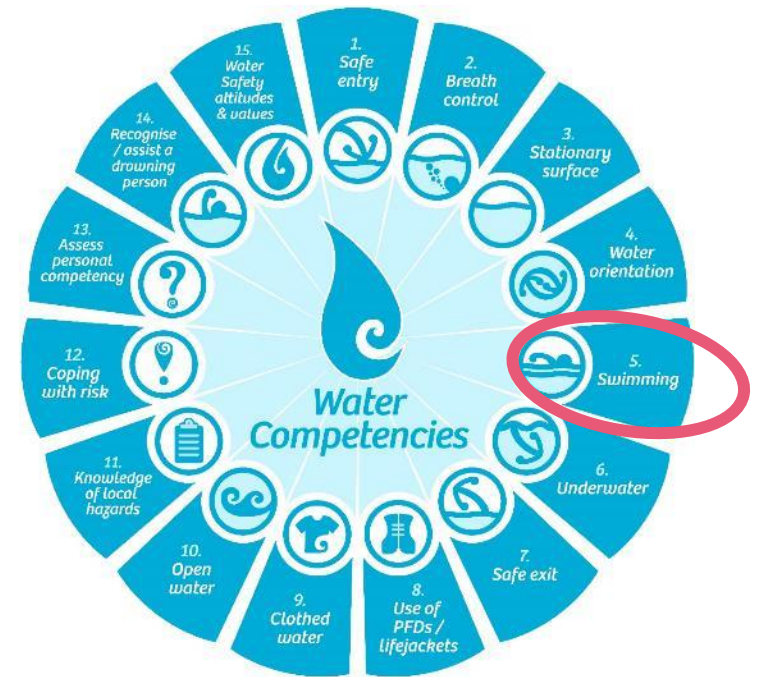
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11-12 yr

Grade 7-9  
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Grade 10  
16 yr

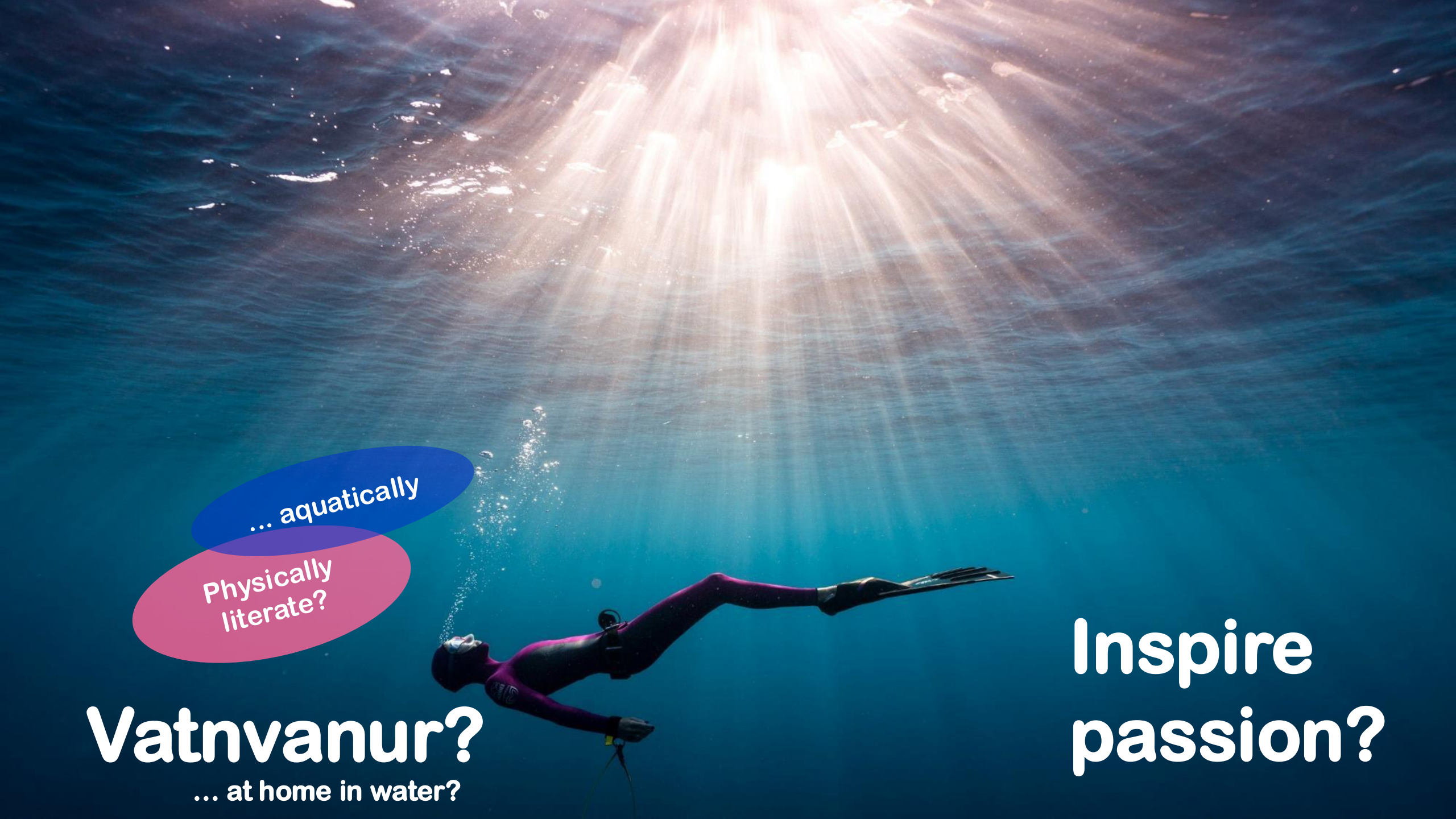


# Why should we learn ~~to swim~~ in the Faroe Islands?

...aquatics?



Prevent  
drowning?



... aquatically

Physically  
literate?

**Vatnvanur?**

... at home in water?

**Inspire  
passion?**



... aquatically

Physically literate?

# Vatnvanur?

... at home in water?

# Prevent drowning?



Does current  
swim teaching  
**transfer** the  
curriculum?



# Schooling for Aquatic Literacy

How do we become vatnvon?

# THE PAL EFFECT

A ~~Faroe Islander's~~ Quest for Swimming Glory

...Nation's...

ROD GILMOUR



# Change the Paradigm— Develop Physical Literacy in Aquatic Environments



...the concept of swimming ability be replaced by the more encompassing notion of water competence with regards to drowning prevention. [sic]

~(Brenner, Moran, Stallman, Gilchrist, & McVan, 2006, p. 116)



Elizabeth Blank

Dudley 2019, Physical Literacy in  
Aquatic Environments

## Where are we now?

“... highly prescriptive and controlled swimming programs are often **supported by government and reinforced by school curricula.**”

## What would need to change?

“...A questioning of the command and **highly controlled learning model** that is predominantly being used.”

## Where do we want to be?

1. Dynamic programs with **exposure** to multiple situations.
2. **Model-based** on a wide range of swimming **competencies.**
3. Models constructed on all **domains** of physical literacy.

What do we  
**observe** from  
school-swimming?

## Student observations 12-year-olds

They always start swimming 20 lanes... and the final 5 lanes the pupils decide how they swim.

The teachers use 30 minutes for this activity and after that, everyone can play.

Somehow it seemed like this was normal for them – they did it because they knew they had to do it.

*Student: Is it fun to swim?*

*Child: Yes.*

*Student : I won't tell anyone.*

*Chld: Okay, it sucks.*

*Student: What sucks?*

*Child: I cannot breathe and when I have swum for a while I get a headache. And there is no room to swim.*

**Student:** Is it fun to swim?

**Child:** I do not like to be last, because the others get to play.

# Why not play to learn?





## Student observations 12-year-olds

*Student: How can it be that you are not swimming today?*

*Child: Because I do not want to, I do not find it fun to swim.*

*Student: Do you usually swim?*

*Child: No.*

*Student: Do you think it is fun to swim?*

*Child: No, not like this.*

...when we later asked the teachers how it was with this student, they said: “**Ooh, that student, this is one of the good students and he actually always swims.** The reason he's not swimming today is because he's been to the dentist”.

What somehow surprises me is that the **pupil and teacher do not say the same.**

How do we teach  
PETE to promote an  
understanding of  
transfer with  
students?

How do we  
become  
vatnvon?



# How does a movement mean?

- \* Meaning is like a number of other elusive concepts.  
*You know it, when you see it, but it is hard to describe it in its absence.*

Fortunately, most of us have seen it. Meaningful movement has impacted our life for the better. Our personal stories have been shaped by it. **We identify ourselves as bikers, swimmers, table tennis players, hikers.**

We do not need to be told that delight can be found running across a grassy field or careening down snowy mountain slopes.

“The trick is to find ways to help others negotiate the same journey.”

R. Scott Kretchmar \*

\* Fletcher et al. 2021, Meaningful Physical Education



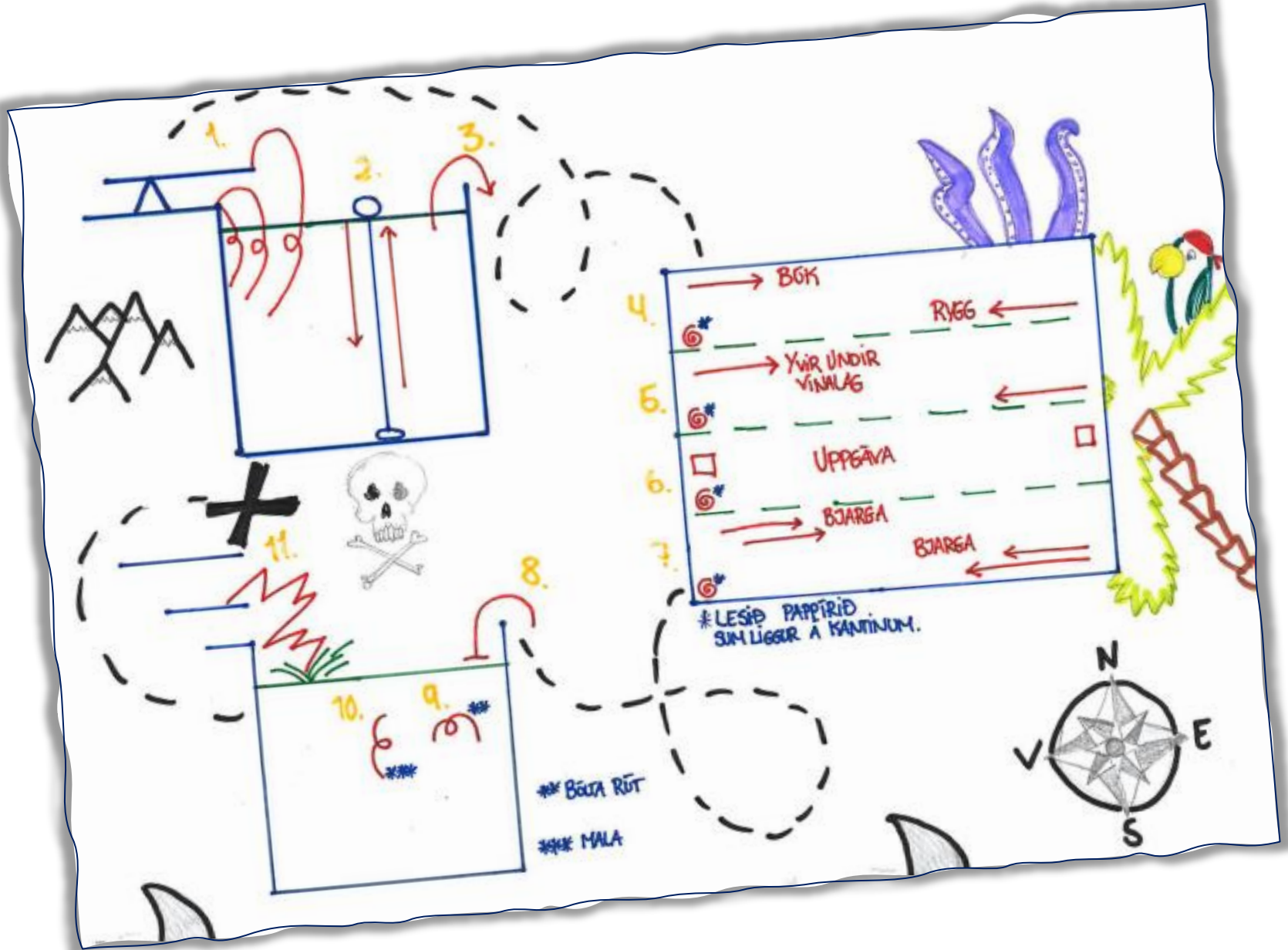
**Where does the  
journey start?**

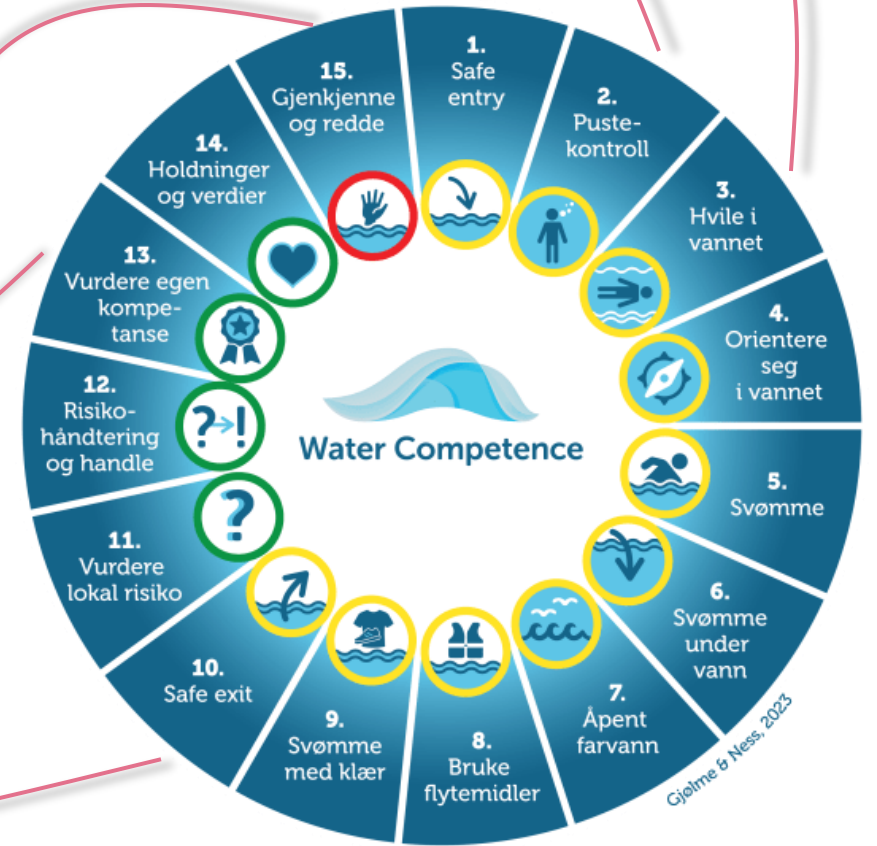
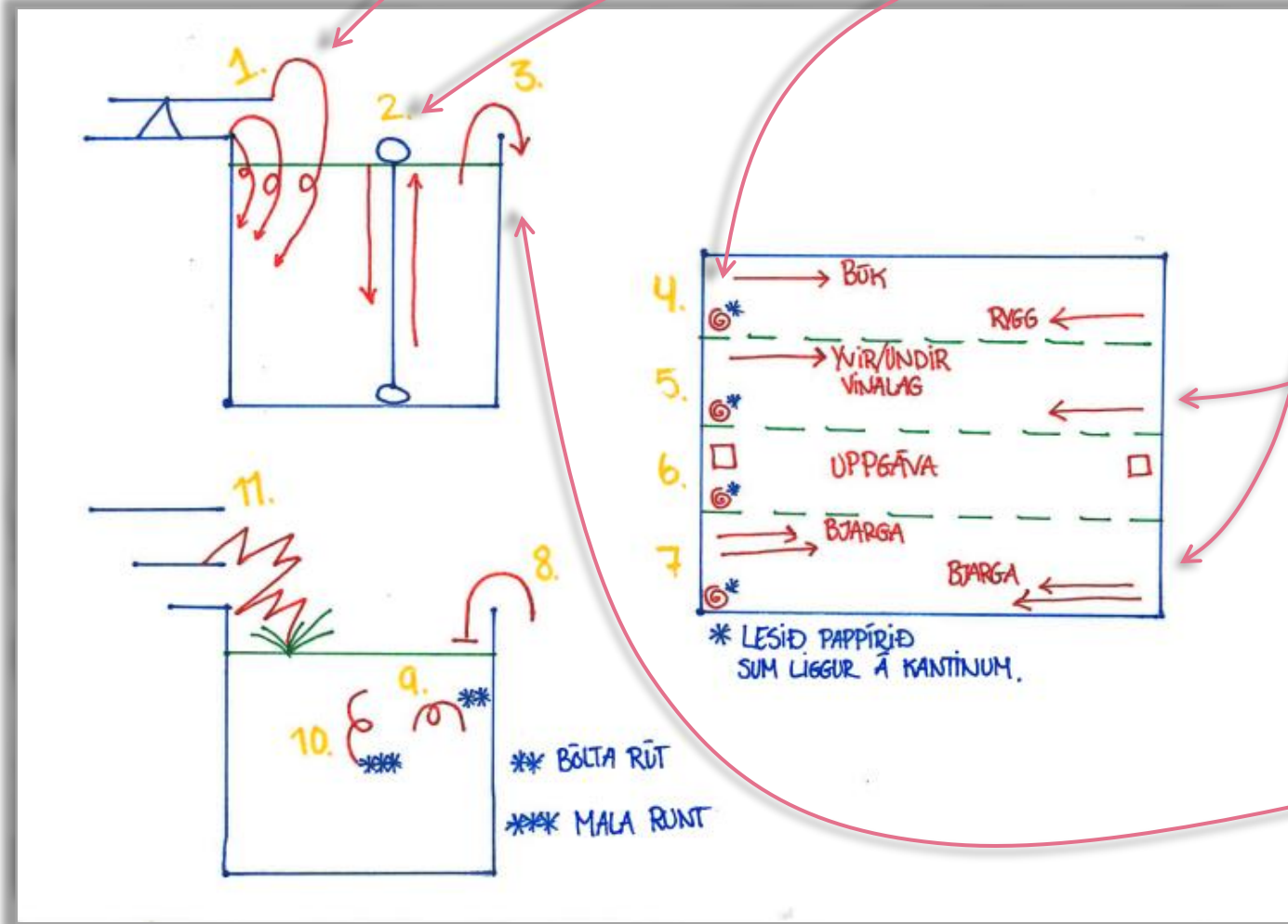






Vatnvon





Then, how do we  
picture a Faroese  
society that has  
become

**VATNVANUR?**



My grandmother has swum for as long as I can remember.

She possesses such a great genuineness and such **respect for the ocean.**

I've never encountered any other human able to **share such a bond** with anything – but another fellow human.

Because it's not really **that much about swimming.** It's about human and nature.

A **love story** about her and the ocean.

*... we never look for the simplest solution. Which might exist just outside their front door like for example the ocean.*

[Link to video](#)









**Thank you**