

## Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Tom Daley

**JVN** [00:00:03] Welcomes "Getting Curious", I'm Jonathan Van Ness. And every week I sit down for a 40 minute conversation with a brilliant expert to learn all about something that makes me curious. On today's episode, I'm joined by world champion Olympic Medalist and soon to be four time Olympic diver Tom Daley, where I ask, "How do you do an inward, two and a half twist, off a 10 meter diving board and not shit your Speedo"? and we talk about a lot more gorgeous stuff to. Welcome to "Getting Curious", this is Jonathan Van Ness and I'm really excited to introduce this week's guests. Icon, Olympian, father, icon, I know I already said that but you really are such an icon without any further ado, Tom Daley.

**TOM DALEY** [00:00:48] Hello.

**JVN** [00:00:50] So picture it. Sometimes we're in a recording studio when we do "Getting Curious".

**TOM DALEY** [00:00:56] Yes.

**JVN** [00:00:56] Now I'm watching Tom Daley, Olympian icon, across from me in a, I don't know if it's vintage, I don't know if it's new, but in a gorgeous rocking chair, honey, she is giving you like,. It's the most beautiful rocking chair.

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:10] It's vintage and also-.

**JVN** [00:01:11] Is it vintage?

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:12] Yeah. And my husband, Lawrence re-upholstered it. So he's done it. Yeah. So it's quite, it's quite the rocking chair.

**JVN** [00:01:19] Um I'm loving that I'm meeting you in this gorgeous nursery. I meeting you in your son's nursery. I mean, your gorgeous house in, in London. But we won't say where for security purposes, you know, we're very-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:29] In London. Yes.

**JVN** [00:01:30] Yeah. We were in London and it's really so gorgeous. And I'm so happy to here. Thanks for having me over.

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:34] Of course I'm glad to be, you could be here.

**JVN** [00:01:35] You know, so I asked you right before we started recording, it's like, you know, is it OK if we title this episode? Because every episode of "Getting Curious", I ask a question.

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:41] Yes.

**JVN** [00:01:42] Sometimes more serious than others. And, you know, this is a serious question. It's like, how do you do like an inward, two and a half off the ten meter diving board and like, not shit your pants?

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:52] It's tough.

**JVN** [00:01:52] In your Speedo.

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:53] Yeah. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:01:54] You know?

**TOM DALEY** [00:01:55] It's, I can tell you right now, every time I stand on that 10 meter board. I'm terrified. There's not, there's not a day that goes by where I stand on it and I'm like, oh yeah, this is easy. This is, like I'm so used to doing this. Like it's so unnatural to stand on a 10 meter platform and think about spinning around and being inches away from the platform and you could hit your head. Land flap, instant bruising, cough up bloods, you know, split your skin like all things I've done. And it just happens. It can happen at this, in a split second. So you kind of have to be scared if you're gonna do it right.

**JVN** [00:02:28] Wow.

**TOM DALEY** [00:02:29] Yeah, it's quite terrifying.

**TOM DALEY** [00:02:31] Is that part of like the adrenalin kind of like thing that keeps you coming back? Is just like that need for like focus and perfection or oh my god, I'm obsessed with this?

**TOM DALEY** [00:02:38] Yeah. I mean, when I was younger, I didn't think about it because you're fearless when you're younger. Like I started when I was seven years old, so I've been doing it for 19 years. And when you're young, you just jump off things you don't think. "Oh, this is easy". Like, I can just, like no fear. You don't know anything bad that's gonna happen. Whereas as I've gotten older, I've gotten more and more scared because I know the consequences that I could have if I did something really bad. And that's, you know, it's just the same as in gymnastics. You can have these like Lost Move Syndromes as well, which I've experienced many times in my diving career where I've actually not physically been able to jump off the diving board.

**JVN** [00:03:12] Why?

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:13] Because you get-.

**JVN** [00:03:14] What syndrome?

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:15] Like Lost Move Syndrome, they call it. So basically there's been lots of time, if you do such a dive wrong, for example, and then you go back up to do it again and you're so terrified that your body just won't allow you to take off.

**JVN** [00:03:27] Oh.

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:28] It's almost like you've forgotten how to do it, even though your body and your muscle memory would do it if you took off. You just can't physically make yourself take off the diving board. And I went through a spell of nine months of not being able to dive when I was younger. Just-

**JVN** [00:03:40] What was the dive?

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:42] It was any dive off of 10-meter. Well, it started off as just doing anything reverse. So gainer, standing forwards.

**JVN** [00:03:49] That's why I can be a diner-, or diver, 'cause those gainers, honey.

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:51] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:03:52] I try to do it for like two months like my freshman year.

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:54] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:03:54] But I could do all the dives except for gainers.

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:56] It's yeah that's the one that-.

**JVN** [00:03:58] I couldn't. So scary.

**TOM DALEY** [00:03:59] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:03:59] This one time like when I was trying to do a gainer flip like, you know, foot first.

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:02] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:04:03] I went so far out that I like belly flopped on the lane line. That was like, it was literally-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:07] Oh my god.

**JVN** [00:04:08] Like 40 feet away. Like I was so scared of hitting the board. I just like went "juoom" like straight off and it hurts so bad. I was like you know what? I just think, I just think that like five hundred free and 100 breaststroke is like what I'm, what I'm good at as a swimmer, you know?

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:19] Born to do. Yeah. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:04:21] I'm not a d-, I'm just not a diver, you know?

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:23] Yeah. And that's the thing though. It is scary. And I started off being scared of that. And then it kind of developed into like, oh, now I can't-. What if I do the same thing on my inward or what about my twisters? What about my-.

**JVN** [00:04:32] A nine month, this happened to you.

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:33] Yeah. So-.

**JVN** [00:04:34] When?

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:34] It was, well gosh it was years ago now. Probably about 12 years ago. I was about 12 years old when it happened.

**JVN** [00:04:41] So pre-, pre-London?

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:44] Yes. And pre- my first, pre-Beijing as well. Pre- my first Olympics. And it has happened since then because in London 2012.

**JVN** [00:04:51] Wait. You were in Beijing when you were-? That was your first one?

**TOM DALEY** [00:04:54] Yeah. Just I just turned 14.

**JVN** [00:04:55] Oh my God. That's when you're, you're baby, little tiny-. For some reason, in my brain, I was thinking that your little tiny smileys self was when that was in '16. But no queen, that was in Beijing. Your first Olympics was the same Olympics as Nastia Liukin and Shawn Johnson? Where have I been? That's when I first saw your smiley little baby self?

**TOM DALEY** [00:05:10] Yeah, that was baby, baby Daly. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:05:13] Oh, my God.

**TOM DALEY** [00:05:16] I know. It feels like an eternity ago now, though.

**JVN** [00:05:18] Yeah. Cause I was like I think I was like 21 when you were like 20-, yeah. Oh my god. Yeah. I was like oh my God. I was so excited. You slayed so hard that Olympics is not even your fault that you did so well.

**TOM DALEY** [00:05:28] I know, I was, I literally had no idea what I was getting into. I think, you know, I had to take time off school, which I was happy about because I was like, yay, I get to go to China for the Olympics, but I didn't. I didn't know how big or the scale of what an Olympic Games was.

**JVN** [00:05:43] You didn't?

**TOM DALEY** [00:05:44] I mean, I knew I always wanted to go to Olympic Games, but when I qualified when I was 13 and it was like, yeah, it's just gonna be at other competition. I'm competing against the same people. But it wasn't until I walked out onto the platform and looked down and saw the Olympic rings on the bottom of the pool. And I was like, oh, wow. Like those five rings on the wall or on the bottom of the pool, really just, you know, hits home like this is the real deal. This is what every single athlete works towards is to compete at the Olympics.

**JVN** [00:06:13] Now, age wise, did you, like qualify by like the skin of your teeth because you were so young?

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:17] So you had to be 14, and I was 14 in 81 days.

**JVN** [00:06:22] So, yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:22] By 81 days, I was old enough to dive. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:06:26] Oh my god, that's less than three months really.

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:27] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:06:28] Ok, so wait. When I was saying like inward to-, how many like inward flips can you actually do like off of a 10 meter?

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:33] Yeah. So the dive I compete-.

**JVN** [00:06:37] You can do like three and a half?

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:37] It's three and a half. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:06:37] Oh my God. I can't-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:41] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:06:41] Ok, so-. Ok, wait. Let's take it all the way back.

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:43] Yes.

**JVN** [00:06:43] So you started diving when you were 7.

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:45] Yes.

**JVN** [00:06:45] So how did you go on to a ten meter the first time? Did you-? Were you like, comfy on like-? Did they make you like 1, 3, 5, 7?

**TOM DALEY** [00:06:52] Yeah. So normally we start off on the poolside for the first few weeks, just learning how to jump in safely and then go headfirst. And then we gradually worked our way up throughout the weeks and I think I jumped off 10 meter for the first time when I was 8 but didn't go headfirst until I was 9, but I had a full competitive 10 meter list by the time I was 10.

**JVN** [00:07:11] Holy shit.

**TOM DALEY** [00:07:13] It's-.

**JVN** [00:07:13] What's a whole competitive 10-meter list consistent of? So six 10 meter dives from every direction and more than one and a half somersaults in each of those directions. So basically two and a half's.

**JVN** [00:07:24] Wow.

**TOM DALEY** [00:07:25] Yeah it was. Yeah. But again, you don't think about it when you're young, you just. Yeah. I'll do that. You know, if your friend told you that, you know, if someone jumps off one of the bridges into the rivers, that's what we used to do in Plymouth. Not recommended.

**JVN** [00:07:39] Is that where you're from?

**TOM DALEY** [00:07:39] Yes. From Plymouth in the southwest, of the London-, of the U.K.

**JVN** [00:07:42] Southwest? Is those like hours away from London?

**TOM DALEY** [00:07:44] Like three and a half hours on a train. Yeah, it's quite far.

**JVN** [00:07:47] What is Plymouth by? What's it-?

**TOM DALEY** [00:07:47] It's like seaside town. It's got two universities, is like the home of like marine biology and the Navy. And also where the Mayflower steps are. Where the Mayflower set-.

**JVN** [00:08:00] Where it left from?

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:01] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:08:02] Oh, my God.

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:03] I know.

**JVN** [00:08:03] Yeah. That's major.

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:03] So it's like a bit of like American history there too.

**JVN** [00:08:05] So would it, well-. Is it, like is it southwest of like the United Kingdom? Is she kind of like compare, is it like compared to like a part of America? Like is it like is it kind of like a bit posh? Or is it a bit like West Virginia? Like in the sense of-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:19] Well I wouldn't put it posh. Lots-.

**JVN** [00:08:22] Do you know what West Virginia's like?

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:24] No.

**JVN** [00:08:24] Okay.

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:25] I've been to Manassas Park.

**JVN** [00:08:27] Is that in West Virginia?

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:28] No, I don't think so.

**JVN** [00:08:29] Oh. Where is that?

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:31] That might just be not, there's, wait. So outside of D.C. is Virginia. But that's not West-? Is West Virginia somewhere completely different?

**JVN** [00:08:38] Well, no, it's just like right-. I mean, there's just this like connotations. It's not a good connotation. I just like, what's like? I guess I'm asking what's like the tea on Plymouth? You know, what's like the-? Is it like? Are people like, you know, like-? You know, like Glasgow, there's gonna be like a little bit of puke on the streets at night.

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:54] Yes.

**JVN** [00:08:54] You know.

**TOM DALEY** [00:08:54] Yeah. It's very student vibe. It's very military. And I feel like there's also a bit of a vibe of, um, well, lots of surfers and it's like also farm-y as well. So there's a bit of everything. Hello?

**JVN** [00:09:11] Come in.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:13] Has he pooped?

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:15] Yeah, I'm sorry.

**JVN** [00:09:15] No.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:16] I did message you but-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:17] Well, I didn't have my phone on me. I'm sorry.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:19] It's OK, honey, sometimes you just got to go poopy.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:22] We got to poo, we got a poo change. Right. I'm just-.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:25] Sorry.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:25] It's fine. You can do it out the-.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:27] Yeah. Oh, yeah. I'm not doing it here. No, don't-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:31] Thank you. Sorry.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:31] Sorry.

**JVN** [00:09:32] Oh, my God.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:33] Thank you.

**JVN** [00:09:34] Poo change in progress. Got that. Sometimes-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:36] Thank goodness for my mum being around.

**JVN** [00:09:39] Love.

**TOM'S MUM** [00:09:39] Well, timed, Robbie.

**JVN** [00:09:40] Well, right?

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:42] I know.

**JVN** [00:09:42] Ok so wait. So I want to talk about Robbie in just a minute. But let's talk about what the six dives are in people just don't know.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:47] Yes.

**JVN** [00:09:48] Because maybe they aren't like us.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:49] Yeah, well, the six dives I do currently.

**JVN** [00:09:51] Not currently. I-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:53] Oh, back then.

**JVN** [00:09:54] Not even back then. Just like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:55] The different directions.

**JVN** [00:09:56] Yes, honey.

**TOM DALEY** [00:09:56] Ok.

**JVN** [00:09:56] 'Cause you got to go all the way back for the casual listener. Maybe they don't even understand fucking cool diving is.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:00] Okay. Right well, start off with the-. There's the first one is forward, which is pretty self-explanatory. You jump off and spin forwards, then you have backwards. So again, standing backwards, rotating backwards. Then you have reverse where you stand forwards, jump forwards and rotate backwards towards the board.

**JVN** [00:10:15] I also fucking hate those.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:18] So last, there are the gainers.

**JVN** [00:10:19] Yes.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:19] That's. And then that's-.

**JVN** [00:10:20] Oh yeah, that's what I mean. Because the inward.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:21] Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then next one is inward where you stand backwards, you jump backwards but rotate forwards towards the diving board.

**JVN** [00:10:27] See that one I could do.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:28] Yeah?

**JVN** [00:10:29] Yeah. Cause I could see where I was going so I wasn't as scared.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:30] Yeah exactly.

**JVN** [00:10:31] And I did like a really cute like an inward one and a half.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:33] Oh good. Really?

**JVN** [00:10:34] I did, I did. Yeah. "Cause only that and then like a forward one and a half, but a back one and a half, I was like I'm gonna shit my pants like let me just do a single.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:40] It's really unnatural to go backwards. And land on your head.

**JVN** [00:10:41] I get so scared when I'd go do it. Oh my god. I'm so scared.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:44] Then twist. So that can be in any direction, any forward, any backward or reverse, you can do any kind of twisting.

**JVN** [00:10:51] Oh yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:51] So you can take off in any, you can rotate in any direction. As long as you're twisting.

**JVN** [00:10:54] An inward twist really blows my mind, honey. How do you even-?

**TOM DALEY** [00:10:58] Not, not many people do that. I don't do, I don't think I've ever done any inward twists.

**JVN** [00:11:03] Could, but, but you could do like I bet you could do like one.

**TOM DALEY** [00:11:06] I mean, I could probably try. I don't know how good it would look? But I could try.

**JVN** [00:11:09] Did you ever, like, learn things like by like going head first, or like excuse me, feet first because it's like less scary. Like, would you do like an inward like full like and then lay just land on your feet 'cause you're like scared to land on your head. Or are you-

**TOM DALEY** [00:11:19] Well some people if you were a gymnast before, you probably would do-. Well, I mean, lots of our lead ups, we do to feet on the lower boards before we go up onto doing headfirst. But at the same time, if you're a gymnast, you feel most comfortable landing on your feet. Whereas as a diver and I've never done gymnastics, I feel most comfortable landing on my head and it's unnatural to land on my feet.

**JVN** [00:11:38] I would argue that because on your Instagram, when you those front flips, you're really good and they like, you stick your feet so good.

**TOM DALEY** [00:11:44] Oh, okay. Yeah, we do a little bit gymnastics training now. We have like a special, specialized coach that comes over and actually really helps us focus on like the little nit picky drills that we have to do to actually be able to. And the last one is the handstand. So that's why the gymnastics really comes in handy.

**JVN** [00:12:00] That dang handstand.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:02] Yeah, it's scary.

**JVN** [00:12:03] We have to like save that for after the break. Because like I don't want to get cut off in the middle of that.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:06] Yes.

**JVN** [00:12:06] So those are what those five categories are.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:09] Yeah, so six. So. Front inward, back reverse, twist and arm stand. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:12:15] Oh arm stand.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:16] Yeah. We call it arm stand in diving.

**JVN** [00:12:18] Ma ma ma ma. So which one do you like the best?

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:22] Oh well. I mean it really does depend on the day. I'd say my best dive, it, is the back three-and-a-half pike which is the dive I finish on, it's the dive I feel most comfortable on, but it really does depend how good my legs feel in a training week.

**JVN** [00:12:36] So your backwards is what makes you feel the most like competent.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:39] Yes, I would say so.

**JVN** [00:12:41] Interest.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:41] Yeah, because the forward one is the my hardest degree of difficulty because it's four and a half somersaults.

**JVN** [00:12:46] Okay. Now we need to talk about degree of difficulty.

**TOM DALEY** [00:12:48] Yes.

**JVN** [00:12:48] So how does that work in diving? There is a formula. I don't exactly know how the formula works, but basically you can invent any dive you want as long as it falls within the categories of what the, any half somersault, any half twists. Any position of straight tuck, pike and free position.

**JVN** [00:13:07] What's free?

**TOM DALEY** [00:13:08] So free is often when you doing twisting because it's not-. When you're twisting, you go through various positions where you do-.

**JVN** [00:13:15] Oh, cause you're-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:13:16] Where you are twisting in a straight position, but then you also have to re-pike and sometimes do a somersault, whatever it is. So that's normally in a free position. So it's a bit of a, table of wonders.

**JVN** [00:13:28] Hold that thought for two seconds while everyone's mind is blown, we're gonna listen to like just a couple of quick ads. Grab yourself a tea, a crumpet, whatever you need. We're going to be back with more "Getting Curious" and Tom Daley right after this. Welcome back to "Getting Curious", this is Jonathan Van Ness. So your, ok yeah. Degree of difficulties. Because I kind of remember when I watch like World's and the Olympics.

**TOM DALEY** [00:13:53] Yes.

**JVN** [00:13:53] It's like the degrees. Isn't it like-? But what, like what are the categories? It's like, first-. What are the degrees again? How does that work?

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:00] So basically every, normally in a men's platform diving competition, the degree of difficulty usually will range between 3.0 and 4.1.

**JVN** [00:14:10] Yes.

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:10] So there's some that a little bit lower than that, but the hardest dives that you're going to be doing, you're going to be seeing as three plus. My lowest degree of difficulty is 3.2 and highest is 3.7. But the way the scoring works is that seven judges, you take the two highest and the two lowest scores-.

**JVN** [00:14:28] Uh huh.

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:29] Away so that you left with three scores. You add those scores together and times them by the degree of difficulty.

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:35] Oh, my god I have to write them down. OK wait. So. Wait. OK, so the degree of difficulty and then the three scores you end up getting and then you add those together and that's what you get?

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:44] And then you times it by the great difficulty. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:14:46] Oh yeah yeah. And then is there six in a competition for 10 meter dive? Every time?

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:49] Yes. Six dives every time. Yeah. So prelim, in semifinal and in a final. You'll always do all six dives.

**JVN** [00:14:55] Always six. It's never like we never do two dives for each category.

**TOM DALEY** [00:14:58] No, it's always six. It's like, yeah, you do every single direction. And in women's diving they do five dives.

**JVN** [00:15:05] Because. Why? Because what do they not do the-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:15:07] So they can choose which one to drop.

**JVN** [00:15:11] Not to do. Oh interest.

**TOM DALEY** [00:15:11] Yeah. Yes.

**JVN** [00:15:13] The arms stand really looks so scary.

**TOM DALEY** [00:15:16] Yeah. I used to be terrible at handstands as well. Like literally I would, when I was younger I would go up into a handstand and I would fall over like right away and it would be my biggest fear in competitions to come down in a handstand because if you come down in a handstand, it's two point deduction from every single judge. Then if you come down twice, it's a failed dive.

**JVN** [00:15:36] Oh, and then you have to just walk down.

**TOM DALEY** [00:15:37] Yeah, you have to walk down. And it's really, I've never, luckily, touch wood and anything I can, would, have never done that. But it's I can imagine it being quite an embarrassing thing.

**JVN** [00:15:46] Now, when you do your arms stands, can you straddle up or pike up or does it depend on the dive?

**TOM DALEY** [00:15:52] I can, I, in competition, I tuck up but I can tuck, pike up and straddle up.

**JVN** [00:15:57] Oh my god.

**TOM DALEY** [00:15:57] I can and kick up. Whatever, I al-, something that, again, I had to learn. And I literally forced myself to learn how to do a handstand at the top of my stairs in my childhood house, so that I could not be so comfortable that I knew I could stay in a handstand at the top.

**JVN** [00:16:13] Did you ever fuck yourself up doing that? Like fall down?

**TOM DALEY** [00:16:16] No, luckily, no. I had to get to a stage, was confident, obviously. Everywhere else before I did that. But I used to spend hours trying to do a handstand in my garden, just on the like patio area. I've just literally be in handstands, falling down, trying again. Trying again. I was a little bit obsessed. Really, with diving.

**JVN** [00:16:32] Well, I mean, you don't get to where you are because you weren't obsessed.

**TOM DALEY** [00:16:35] True.

**JVN** [00:16:35] Sidebar. I could listen to you just say "literally" over and over.

**TOM DALEY** [00:16:41] Literally.

**JVN** [00:16:42] A British person saying "literally" is my favorite thing. It always has and it always been something that just like, "Oh my god", I just like I feel like it could be like my wake up track, my sleep track, my like my motivation track. I think it's it's I. Is anyone ever said that to you before?

**TOM DALEY** [00:16:56] I go through phases of different words. At one point it was "amazing".

**JVN** [00:16:59] Oh I love that word too.

**TOM DALEY** [00:16:59] Everything was amazing. And now it's like "literally amazing".

**JVN** [00:17:01] That's one word that to me is like tuned out, like doesn't wanna talk any more. "That's amazing". Please stop talking like that's like-

**TOM DALEY** [00:17:08] Oh, that's cool. That's great.

**JVN** [00:17:09] So wait, so what was the dive not to like, you know, war story, but what was the dive that made you get the movement for-, forgetting syndrome?

**TOM DALEY** [00:17:19] Well, the the first time it happened, it was a reverse takeoff because I was on holiday and I was diving on poolside and I hit my head.

**JVN** [00:17:30] On the side of the pool.

**TOM DALEY** [00:17:31] On the side of the pool. So then when I came back to training after my holiday, I was like terrified to even go on the platform or go on the springboard. But my most like the biggest one for me was in the London 2012 Olympic Games. In the Olympic final, I did my first dive in front of 18,000 people in the crowd and millions of people watching at home. And I got a little bit lost and disoriented in the air because there was tons of flashes, flash photography coming on from the audience. And I remember hitting the water and think like absolutely terrified. Not really sure exactly what just happened. Like, I somehow managed to find my way out of the dive and I immediately stuck my hand up, went over to the referee and said to him, please, can you tell people to turn off their flashes? Because I was just distracted, completely got lost where I was in the air and it was not fair. And it was actually I think it might be the first time in an Olympic final where I was actually awarded a re-dive. So when he said I could get the re-dive, I then kind of was

like, I don't think I can actually go back up there and do that dive again because I was so terrified to walk back up to the stairs. Everybody was waiting, everybody was watching, it was silent.

**JVN** [00:18:47] So you had to do it right away?

**TOM DALEY** [00:18:48] I had to do it right away. I literally, he said go. And I was like, right. There was no warm up, no nothing. Just go. So I went back up there, did it. And after that competition, I wasn't able to let that dive for me, became like my nemesis.

**JVN** [00:19:05] Is it still?

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:05] I had to change dive.

**JVN** [00:19:07] What was it? What was it then?

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:08] So back then, it was a back two and a half somersaults with two and a half twists. And since then, I tried doing it for a whole year of competition. And it was just so stressful and so terrifying. Like I lost sleep. I was I couldn't eat certain things on certain days. I became so superstitious and everything was, couldn't walk under ladders, couldn't walk on drains. I couldn't walk on lines in the pavement. It was-.

**JVN** [00:19:30] I noticed the knock on wood. But I do that, too. I think that's kind of normal.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:33] Yeah. Like a knock on wood is a thing, but like I literally lived my life.

**JVN** [00:19:36] But I also get stressed out-. Yeah, but I also don't like to step on a crack.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:39] OK.

**JVN** [00:19:39] I also literally like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:42] Lots of things.

**JVN** [00:19:42] I fucking broke a goddamn mirror.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:45] Oh no.

**JVN** [00:19:45] No, I did. Like the day I got to London, I broke a fucking mirror. I did.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:50] We've, at least you've spoken about it. Like you know?

**JVN** [00:19:52] Is it, does that undo it a little bit?

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:52] I feel like that helps it a little bit.

**JVN** [00:19:54] Ah, that's nice.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:54] Right?

**JVN** [00:19:55] So it used to be a two and a half with-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:57] Two and a half twists.

**JVN** [00:19:59] Wow.

**TOM DALEY** [00:19:59] Yeah. So it was lots of twists and lots of somersaults-, you take off and do the twists first.

**JVN** [00:20:04] And then does that mean that you end up facing forward-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:07] Yes.

**JVN** [00:20:07] 'Cause you were facing backwards and then like you go in forward.

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:11] Head first. Yes.

**JVN** [00:20:11] Yeah. Well, of course head first but like you, but like you're like your torsos pointed towards the platform when you enter.

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:15] Yeah. Exactly. So yeah. Yeah. You're hitting the water as if you're doing a forward entry dive. Yeah. So it's lots of that.

**JVN** [00:20:21] Does anyone do two and a half with three so that your body's facing like the other way often?

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:25] Oh no, often, lots of people in diving won't check out facing and going in for a backward entry because that's really quite-.

**JVN** [00:20:31] Dangerous?

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:32] Difficult to do, dangerous and not worth the degree of difficulty. So lots of-.

**JVN** [00:20:37] It's not?

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:37] Because people rather than do three twists they would just do three and a half.

**JVN** [00:20:41] Oh.

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:42] Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:42] Because it's weird to stop yourself?

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:42] Yeah. They would do a full. They would add an extra twist, rather than half a twist.

**JVN** [00:20:46] Does anyone do three just to be tricky?

**TOM DALEY** [00:20:48] I don't know. Some, well, people do like when they do forward two and a half somersaults they'll do three twists but they won't do forward two and a half with three and a half twists because they'll be facing the wrong way.

**JVN** [00:20:58] Yeah, because so it's basically that you always like want your back facing away from the platform when you're going to dive?

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:03] Yes.

**JVN** [00:21:03] Usually.

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:03] On a twisting one. Yeah absolutely. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:21:06] Maybe you should invent like a three and just be like, I'm really tricky, like0.

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:09] I'm just going to do it.

**JVN** [00:21:10] Like I'm gonna be this bitch who does three.

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:12] Yeah, well I-.

**JVN** [00:21:12] Bye China!

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:13] I wish.

**JVN** [00:21:14] I'm that bitch with three twists now.

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:16] Yeah. No that that would not be me. I. Since that time I'm terrified of twisting.

**JVN** [00:21:21] Of twisting. Oh really?

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:22] So now I I had to like relearn a dive. Well, I say relearn, nobody had done the dive before. So we actually took a circus trick from Cirque du Soleil that someone did on a Russian swing and studied it to try and figure out how it would be possible to do on a 10 meter platform. And we basically turned a circus trick into an Olympic dive.

**JVN** [00:21:43] Isn't that rude that in gymnastics that would be called like the daily?

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:47] I know I. That's why, it could have been.

**JVN** [00:21:50] Why did that-? Did, divers don't do that?

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:52] It's not a thing. It's not a thing in diving.

**JVN** [00:21:54] You should just like, when, do you have to submit your dives before the meet?

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:56] Yes.

**JVN** [00:21:56] You should just like only fucking call it that from now on.

**TOM DALEY** [00:21:59] The daily. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:21:59] You're an Olympian, for fuck's sake.

**TOM DALEY** [00:22:01] Yeah. My, Lance, my husband nicknamed it "the firework" because it's, I'll show you a video, but it's light forward, three and a half somersaults with one twist. So I run down the platform, take off and do two and a half somersaults in a pike shape. And then I flick out, do one twist and then lands on my head. It's. But yeah. I dunno if you can visualize that.

**JVN** [00:22:21] I think I can. So you do, do you're little run then you skip jump two and a half.

**TOM DALEY** [00:22:27] Yeah. Then flick out twist and then land on my, while I'm doing another somersault.

**JVN** [00:22:31] So you do a forward full and then come out and do one more after that?

**TOM DALEY** [00:22:34] Yes.

**JVN** [00:22:35] Wow.

**TOM DALEY** [00:22:36] Yeah. So it's a bit summersaults are interesting.

**JVN** [00:22:38] So how do you learn a new dive like that?

**TOM DALEY** [00:22:41] So in the belt. So like you know, like within a harness basically. So you have ropes and you have a belt round you and your coach kind of holds you with a rope. So you start doing that on a trampoline. And then as you start doing that, you then transfer into, we have like these diving spring balls that go into a foam pit.

**JVN** [00:22:55] Yes.

**TOM DALEY** [00:22:56] So we basically just use foam pits and lots of stuff, dry land and working on each of the different elements to take off the middle part. The. How are you gonna get out the dive and just. But with the dive, because nobody has done it, there aren't really any set build ups that you could do on the lower board. So it was kind of just a. Suck it and see, so it was just had to.

**JVN** [00:23:18] What and see?

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:18] Suck it-. Is that not a saying in America?

**JVN** [00:23:22] No.

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:23] No. Okay.

**JVN** [00:23:24] What does it mean? Just like throw it.

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:25] Just like, screw it. Like, just see what happens.

**JVN** [00:23:28] So how many times did you try it before you like, threw it on the 10-meter for the first time?

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:32] So I mean-.

**JVN** [00:23:34] So this was post '12?

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:35] So yes, it was actually 2015. It was the year before 2016.

**JVN** [00:23:39] Actually let's, actually we need to go back. Because we were right in the middle of 2012.

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:42] Let's do it.

**JVN** [00:23:43] So you had just-. Okay. So in, ok so in 2012 you won bronze in synchro-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:49] Individual.

**JVN** [00:23:49] Individual.

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:50] Yes.

**JVN** [00:23:50] So then in '08, we're you like Oh my God, I'm-, because I felt like you did really good, and did you like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:23:55] I got, we came, I came seventh in the individual event and I missed, I messed up one of my dives. I mean I wasn't expected to even qualify, let alone actually go there in the final.

**JVN** [00:24:04] Because I remember thinking-. Like because I remember, because in America, like in '08 you were like really everyone was like, it was a whole thing.

**TOM DALEY** [00:24:11] Oh really?

**JVN** [00:24:11] Like you because we were like, "Oh my god, that little baby British boy, ahhh! He's so good"! So it was like really exciting but I'm sure you had that here too in Britain obviously. But I remember feeling like you did really well. Like I felt like going over there, I'm like, oh man, he's like so poised. Like you. Like you're I definitely feel like, you know, that this like your narrative was after that, like rising star slaying. Everyone's obsessed.

**TOM DALEY** [00:24:30] I was kind of just I think more I always said I'm there for the experience. Like to soak in as much as I can. I've no idea wh-, I never knew what it was like to be in the Olympic

Village. I didn't know what it was like to have to go to the food court and catch the bus to make sure that I got to the pool at the right time. And as a 14 year old, I was kind of just like so overwhelmed with what everything was happening.

**JVN** [00:24:54] 'Cause you had to like do all that then?

**TOM DALEY** [00:24:55] Oh, yeah. So like you do all of the-.

**JVN** [00:24:57] Was your mom, was your mom there? So she could help you like, get around?

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:00] Oh, no, I've been traveling on my-, I went to my first competition without my mom and dad when I was like 10.

**JVN** [00:25:07] Really?

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:07] I went to all the way to Australia as well.

**JVN** [00:25:10] Okay. That makes me feel a little better because it coming into your house and just like generally, you generally, even though you think you're like a decade younger than me or like seven years younger than me, yeah because you're born in '94, right?

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:17] Yeah, '94.

**JVN** [00:25:17] No so yeah. It's like that. Yeah. You're so mature.

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:21] Really?

**JVN** [00:25:22] Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:22] I mean I have my moments where I'm not.

**JVN** [00:25:24] But you're so like, I think that's probably like the thing that you got a little baby, a little baby baby. And you're like, you know, you've been training like for your whole life, you just, you know how to like get her done. You know?

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:32] Yeah. I think it's one of those things when you do something from such a young age, you have to, and you live away from home for lots of time. You kind of have to grow up.

**JVN** [00:25:40] I mean, yeah, that's I have some more questions about that. But back to the Olympics. 2008, honey. So you do individually and you do synchro and you do, and you do really, really well and you're like oh my god experiencing success. I can't believe you did all that alone. Very like. Hope you're okay. But obviously you got here in one piece.

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:55] We're here.

**JVN** [00:25:55] Then 2012 you go to London.

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:58] Yes.

**JVN** [00:25:58] Home pressure.

**TOM DALEY** [00:25:59] Oh, gosh.

**JVN** [00:26:00] Yeah. I mean that was like, ah, do we need to take a break? Jesus Christ. Okay. Once again, everyone, we love you so much. We'll be right back with more Olympian talk with Tom Daley right after this. Welcome back to "Getting Curious", this is Jonathan Van Ness. So you're minding your own business.

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:19] Yes.

**JVN** [00:26:19] You qualify for the Olympics, which that wasn't really, like I mean, you're like like not to be rude, but like no one's like trying to step to you in like the UK for like you've kind of got the crown from the to and you're obviously going to qualify for the Olympics.

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:30] In 2012?

**JVN** [00:26:31] Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:31] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:26:32] And now and in 2-, like you kind of in slaying it, like aren't you like, are you like a 15 time like British national champion?

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:38] I don't know how many times I've won.

**JVN** [00:26:40] Probably 27.

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:41] But but yeah.

**JVN** [00:26:42] I think it's so many times you don't know what it could be, it's like it's so many times.

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:46] Yeah. Lots of times.

**JVN** [00:26:47] Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:26:47] I mean it was I remember qualifying and I actually when I was back when was like 9, I wrote in a book and I drew a picture of me doing a handstand and I had drew the Olympic rings and wrote underneath it, "London 2012". So I had always set my sights on London 2012 being the Olympic Games that I wanted to compete in because it's a once in a lifetime opportunity to compete in Olympic Games. And then you add on top of that diving in front of a home crowd where all of your friends and all your family can come and watch and support you. It was one of the best things, but also one of the most terrifying, scary things I've ever had to experience in my life, because the pressure and the expectation and, you know, seeing your face

on billboards like right outside the pool and on ads and all these different things, and then it comes to you being in the pool and you've got to perform.

**JVN** [00:27:41] Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:27:41] And it was you know, every Olympian will feel this, but there's four years of training, hard work and effort and sacrifice that goes into it. And then you get one opportunity, you get one shot. And if you mess up, it's over and you got to wait another four year. Which is, I think, why you see so much emotion at an Olympic Games, because it is the pinnacle of any athlete's career. And the fact that it comes round once every four years is a blessing and a curse, because sometimes it can work where you've like perfectly prepped yourself to be exactly right in that quadrennial. But at the same time, you can also find yourself there and not best prepared. So it's a yes, it's a terrifying place. But I remember in London, it wasn't until the final where I was just like, you know what? Why am I worrying? Why am I stressing? Why am I panicking myself? This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. If I can't enjoy it now, when am I going to be able to enjoy diving?

**JVN** [00:28:40] Do you remember in the, in that final of just trying to be like "Ok, like remember like what, you know, the the shammy feels like. Remember like what this like look-" Because don't you even like a little hot tub afterwards. Like a second?

**TOM DALEY** [00:28:50] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:28:50] What is that little thing?

**TOM DALEY** [00:28:51] Well there is a hot tub. I do not get in the, I-.

**JVN** [00:28:56] You just rinse?

**TOM DALEY** [00:28:56] Yeah, I shower off.

**JVN** [00:28:57] And do you do that to get the chlorine off of us so we don't get scratchy.

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:00] Yes, so the shower I, that's what I do. And it also keeps you warm because the pool can be cold if you're waiting in between dives for a long time. But I'm not going to lie. All those divers that get in that hot tub after the thing, they're using that as a bathroom. It's gross, which is why I do not go in the hot tub. It's disg-. Honestly, it's disgusting and you like, why are you like-.

**JVN** [00:29:22] You heard it here first, honey.

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:24] Yeah. It's disgusting. Never get in the divers' hot tubs. Because I mean, watch a diver in a training session. When do they ever go run over to the bathroom?

**JVN** [00:29:33] Never?

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:33] They don't.

**JVN** [00:29:33] Oh.

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:34] They run in and they get in the hot tub. And it's disgusting. Which is why I do not go in the hot tub.

**JVN** [00:29:38] You, you call it out.

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:40] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:29:40] So in '12-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:42] Yes.

**JVN** [00:29:42] You're-. OK. So because. Wait. Because that was you had to re-dive?

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:45] Yes. That was when.

**JVN** [00:29:47] In '12.

**TOM DALEY** [00:29:47] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:29:47] So you re-dive and so, did the, when you re-dive, obviously, it ended up pretty good 'cause-. But do you feel like you could, do-? Are you like, do you feel like that. How? So did you, because-. Just tell me everything about that entire final. Like maybe like a blow-by-blow almost if you were like, didn't, have you gone back and like watch on YouTube and like, watch it like you and the commentator said and stuff?

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:07] I have watched it back. But now watching it back, I had-.

**JVN** [00:30:12] Are you mad you had to re-dive?

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:13] Unless I win a competition, I get mad watching myself back. It's one of those things, so I try not to watch.

**JVN** [00:30:18] Especially in a London Olympics. Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:19] Yeah, I know. Like I was in first going into the last round.

**JVN** [00:30:24] No.

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:25] I know.

**JVN** [00:30:25] God.

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:25] It's annoying because I didn't mess up my last time either because I scored 10s and 9 and a half. But my the people, the Chinese diver and the American diver that came after me were had a high degree of difficulty. So they just they got 9 and a half's as well.

**JVN** [00:30:39] An American got second that year?

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:41] American won.

**JVN** [00:30:42] He did?

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:43] David Boudia.

**JVN** [00:30:44] Oh, yeah, I remember, honey. I like, this is what I'll say, I loved his last name. I always thought that last name was catchy, honey. Great last name. You know, it's a cute last name.

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:53] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:30:54] Yours is cute. Yours is really cute too.

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:55] And you know, his synchro partner? He's got a good name.

**JVN** [00:30:58] What's his last name?

**TOM DALEY** [00:30:59] Well he's his name is Steele Johnson.

**JVN** [00:31:02] Oh.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:02] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:31:02] Fun name.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:03] I know.

**JVN** [00:31:04] I mean honestly. But who is like the one that we're still talking about? You know what I'm saying? Like you. You know what I'm saying? So you came away with bronze in London. But I mean, obviously you become an Olympic medalist. Like that's-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:16] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:31:16] Fucking.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:17] Dream come true.

**JVN** [00:31:18] You, and on home. So I mean and honestly, ever since Michelle Kwan won a bronze Olympic medal, I loved bronze medals. Like until she won one I was like, like I was like, they're great 'cause all Olympic medals are amazing. And actually on an aesthetic level. I've also been partial to bronze.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:33] Oh, really? Yeah. No, I. Yeah. I mean I've obviously I've always wanted a gold but-.

**JVN** [00:31:37] Oh no. Of course, but like when you when but when we take like the, you know, like the first, second and third out of it, like, bronze is fucking gorgeous. She is stunning.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:44] Yeah. I think when you buy a table. You're not gonna buy like well maybe you'll buy gold table, I don't know,.

**JVN** [00:31:48] Bronze your table.

**TOM DALEY** [00:31:49] Bronze is nice.

**JVN** [00:31:50] Yeah, not tacky, no, bronze is gorgeous. So you become bronze, you become an Olympic. I mean that is. I don't I feel like that's like such a gigantic win, I'm just like not I can't, I, I, I would like probably eat one of my cat's legs for an Olympic bronze. That was like my own. You know what I'm saying?

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:05] No, I know you mean, and it is like the most amazing feeling to win an Olympic medal because it's what every athlete dreams of. And then, you know, bronze just seems to be my color at the minute even in 2016. But, you know, working towards it, world championships, I've had them a lot.

**JVN** [00:32:25] Don't you dare bring up world championships without me bringing because I already know, honey. I've seen them all up. So-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:29] Yes.

**JVN** [00:32:29] Because you are a multi-award champion, multi-time. And because you're like you won your first world championship in '0-?

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:36] 9.

**JVN** [00:32:37] '09.

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:37] Yes.

**JVN** [00:32:38] And then your-, because aren't you three?

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:40] Three. Two individuals and one team.

**JVN** [00:32:43] Synchro, oh team.

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:44] A team event. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:32:45] Oh cute. When did diving start doing are doing team?

**TOM DALEY** [00:32:46] So they only do at the world championships and they have a male and a female athlete and they have to do platform and springboard. So you have to do a combination. So two dives on plat-. Well, overall, three dives on platform, three dives on springboard, but at least each person has to do one on each.

**JVN** [00:33:03] Okay, so you win your first in '09 and then your second was?

**TOM DALEY** [00:33:08] The team was in 2015 and then individual in 2017.

**JVN** [00:33:11] Oh yeah. Okay. So from '09 to '17 because the '09 you probably did that first dive there-, or the dive that you had to re-dive on that you don't do any more because-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:33:18] I used a completely easier list than I-, the, all the dives I did in the 2009, they were completely different in 2012 and 2016 the dives. Because I haven't learned all of my full men's list yet. It was still like the basic stuff. It just happened that I did the basic stuff really well. So it was just like my day.

**JVN** [00:33:39] Love that.

**TOM DALEY** [00:33:39] You know?

**JVN** [00:33:40] So what about 2017? What happened then?

**TOM DALEY** [00:33:42] So 2017 was kind of like a bit of a redemption year for me, because in 2016 I had the best prelim of my life, an Olympic record and won the prelim. And then the next day I had the semifinal and I had the worst day of my life, diving wise. And I completely bombed out, came last in the semifinal. And didn't even make the final.

**JVN** [00:34:04] No! Ok, but wait. Wasn't that also the Olympics when that diving pool turned green?

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:09] Yes, it was. I know.

**JVN** [00:34:11] So what was that like? So, were you minding your own business and then you went to pool and were like, "This shit's green"!

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:15] Yeah. And then by the end of it, I had a sinus infection.

**JVN** [00:34:17] You did not?

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:17] I did. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:34:19] I bet it's really hard to compete with like any sort of sickness-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:21] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:34:21] 'Cause you're like spinning and flipping like your head hurts.

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:23] And especially with sinus things, because you hit the water in your head just squeaks and it like feels like it's gonna explode. But, you know, that's a whole different story. But yeah.

**JVN** [00:34:30] So but in '17, you come back, you win fucking world championship.

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:33] Yes.

**JVN** [00:34:34] Love that story.

**TOM DALEY** [00:34:34] Yeah. I mean, that for me was like I remember coming back from 2016 completely heartbroken. I mean, we won a bronze in synchro, but that individual event I felt was going to be my time and everything was perfect going into it. It just was one of those days. And I remember just feeling so destroyed by it. And I didn't know how I was gonna get back on the diving board. I didn't know how I was going to find the motivation to or the courage to get back up onto the board again. And I think I took about four months off of diving and I came back and I said, this year is gonna be different. It's gonna be about enjoying diving again, finding the love for it, not just going through the motions and making sure I do every, turning over every single thing. It was about enjoying it. Remembering what it was like to dive in 2008, 2009, where I didn't have any worries about expectation or anything like that. And that was a really difficult thing to do. But I got to 2017 world championships and I had so much fun. It was the most fun I've ever had in a competition. I remember going up on the diving board, dancing around in between rounds and just being present and enjoying the moment rather than thinking about what was going to come if I didn't do this dive right. Oh my gosh. I did that dive so badly or that one went really well. I was just able to be in the moment and I found this sense of flow that I've never experienced before in my life. And I remember seeing the Chinese diver do his last dive just before me. And he was celebrating with his teammates as if he had won. And, you know, because I needed to basically get 10s on my last dive to still win. And I saw him down there and I was like, you know what, I'm not going to let him have it two years in a row. He cannot, like there was something inside me that just, I don't know, ignited. And I stood on the end of that platform and I just knew that it was going to be my time-, it was so weird. It was like I it was like an out-of-body experience. I just stood on the end of the board and I was like, I got this. Like, you just, it was like I just knew it was gonna happen. And yeah, I remember hitting the water and just-. Almost felt like I could have been a dolphin and just like shoot like, shot out of the water and just-. But it was. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:36:49] Did you know instantly when you hit the water, you, I feel that that anti-splash, honey, like it came down with me, there's no splash?

**TOM DALEY** [00:36:54] Yeah. I mean, I, I hit the water I knew I'd done a pretty good dive because the whole, I hit the water and as I split my hands I really felt that time, the vacuum of the water that kind of sucks-.

**JVN** [00:37:04] Yeah. Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:05] You under. So then I was like, that's gotta be it. And I looked to my coach and she was hobbling around. She had a snapped Achilles at the time. So she was hopping up and down. It was really sweet.

**JVN** [00:37:15] And then you looked up and you realize that you'd won?

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:17] Yeah. And I looked up, realized I'd won. And my mom and my husband were in the audience, and they had their flags. And it was just like the perfect moment.

**JVN** [00:37:24] Now it's 2020. It just turned 2020.

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:26] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:37:26] And Robbie, you're a little baby is?

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:29] Yeah. He's 19 months. So he was born on June 27, 2018.

**JVN** [00:37:32] So that was just after, it was like the year after the world champs?

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:36] Yeah, after the world championship.

**JVN** [00:37:36] So he, he's seen a competition now?

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:37] Yeah. So he's been to watch me at Nationals. He's been to World Series competitions and he's gonna be going to Japan. So.

**JVN** [00:37:46] Oh my God.

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:47] He'll be there for the Olympics. So.

**JVN** [00:37:47] Ok, so I have several more questions. Okay. So, yes, I'm so glad you brought up the vacuum at the end-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:52] Yes.

**JVN** [00:37:52] Of the dive. So what are the stages of the dive, honey?

**TOM DALEY** [00:37:55] So there's the approach at the end of the board. So once the whistle blows in the competition, there's different things that you get marked on, essentially. So the approach to the end of the board, if you're doing a running take off or a hurdle step on a springboard. Then they take off. So how high you go, how much extension you get out of the board, the flight, which is the dive itself. So how neat you are when you're spinning around, how high you finish. And then lastly, the rip-in, the entry. So hitting the water with as little splash. And as vertical as possible. And to do that, you have to kind of grab your hands on top of each other in a way that's not like swimming where it's like this. You have to have a flat hand, one hand on top of each other. And when you hit the water, you flick your wrist and pull your hands apart, which creates like a air vacuum that sucks down any splash that was going to come back up.

**JVN** [00:38:44] So the second your hands touch, so the second you feel your hands touch water.

**TOM DALEY** [00:38:48] Yes.

**JVN** [00:38:48] You go like, pfft.

**TOM DALEY** [00:38:49] Yeah. So as soon as you hit the water, you have to kind of just do like that and you've split your hands. Your arms go. Your arms hit the water at 35 miles an hour, they automatically get taken out to the side and then you have to save it. So either bending your legs

on a back entry to correct any angles or doing a forward roll under the water. Really quickly, if you going over on a forward entry.

**JVN** [00:39:12] I feel like I've seen that on the underwater camera from like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:39:14] Yeah. You see people like rolling or bending their legs and doing things to try and correct angles.

**JVN** [00:39:19] But that's like almost, it's like kind of. It, so basic-, but if you come in at a different angle, does that get determined, like because of the way you flicked out? Or could it be like any number of things?

**TOM DALEY** [00:39:28] It can be like if you're spinning too slowly, if you're, if you come out too early, too late. This is, there's lots of different things. But when you're diving, you keep your eyes open and like a dancer, spin around and spot the wall and keep that, we spin around and spot the water. So we know exactly where we are in the air. So we know when to come out. So it's just who can be the best judge of how high they are and make the adjustments needed. So-.

**JVN** [00:39:52] But the judges like it better if you've finished the spinning and the twisting like higher up.

**TOM DALEY** [00:39:56] Yes. So the easier you make it look, the better the dive, essentially.

**JVN** [00:40:01] And it's easier if you finish higher because you've got all your work down?

**TOM DALEY** [00:40:04] Little more time. Yeah. Yeah. Exactly. So.

**JVN** [00:40:06] So when you said that you split your shit open, honey, you've bled you did all this stuff.

**TOM DALEY** [00:40:10] Yeah. Got a scar on my head here.

**JVN** [00:40:12] It was so. Yes. So what hap-? Was it the scariest thing you ever did?

**TOM DALEY** [00:40:16] Oh gosh. There's been many scary thi-. I think the the scariest thing for any diver in particular is learning a new dive because your jumping into the unknown, you have no idea. If you've never done the skill before. You've never done the movement. That moment where you learn something new is so terrifying. But then when you hit the water, you get this such a big rush of adrenalin that you've just learned something brand new that your body has never experienced before. Like you've probably experienced it with gymnastics when you take off and you do your first, you know, skill that you've not done before.

**JVN** [00:40:48] Yeah, on a much less scale, but yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:40:50] But you know.

**JVN** [00:40:51] Yeah, yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:40:51] Like the first time, your body's never done it.

**JVN** [00:40:51] You're so excited because you've learned something new. Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:40:53] Yeah. You just get like it's kind of terrifying. But at the same time, once you've done it, it's like so like exciting that you just. Yeah. Want to like scream almost.

**JVN** [00:41:01] So now, so now in '20, like obviously body hold up everything is going like, you know, everything's going to plan. Are you, do you think you're gonna do the same list as like '17.

**TOM DALEY** [00:41:12] Yes, that's the plan. So I'm going to do the same list.

**JVN** [00:41:15] Does that have the three and a half with the one?

**TOM DALEY** [00:41:16] Yeah that's a three and a half with the full twist. Yeah. And it's, but I'm gonna be diving in a different synchro partner. I've dived with a different synchro partner every Olympics so far. I'm a bit of a synchro slut. You know?

**JVN** [00:41:26] That's OK. It's kind of like the lady in "The Cutting Edge". You know? She always has a different partner.

**TOM DALEY** [00:41:31] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:41:31] Have you never seen "The Cutting Edge".

**TOM DALEY** [00:41:32] No. No.

**JVN** [00:41:34] Wow.

**TOM DALEY** [00:41:34] I'm really bad, considering I've got filmmakers as a husband. I'm really bad at watching TV and film.

**JVN** [00:41:37] You guys should watch "The Cutting Edge" together. It's such a classic. Do you know what it's about?

**TOM DALEY** [00:41:41] No.

**JVN** [00:41:41] It's this gorgeous Paris figure skating movie from the early 90s where there's this hockey player who gets this, he gets this blind spot, honey. So he can't try, he can't do hockey anymore. But for some reason, he can inexplicably like do Paris figure skating, even though he can't do ice hockey anymore because of this blind spot. So he's like, let me throw your ass around and stuff. But I can't, like, get checked anymore. So he's start. He joins this lady who got silver like nationals or the Olympics or something because of this like fall. That was actually her fault. But she kind of pins on always her partner. So she'd been doing three partners and then her and Doug Dorsey, that was his name. They finally get together and then they end up getting their full Olympic glory with this like move that's called the pachinko. That's physically impossible. But in early 90s movies-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:42:20] Anything's possible.

**JVN** [00:42:21] Yeah. It was so good. But anyway. So you're thinking you're going to do the same list?

**TOM DALEY** [00:42:24] Yes, I'll do the same list. Yeah.

**JVN** [00:42:25] Which at the competition, isn't there like-? Aren't like the first two kind of like the, like isn't there like two that are kind of like easier?

**TOM DALEY** [00:42:31] In the synchro. In the synchro there's two easy dives and then four hard dives.

**JVN** [00:42:35] But in individual is like all calls to the wall?

**TOM DALEY** [00:42:37] So yeah exactly. All six. You just gotta go for it.

**JVN** [00:42:40] So your doing a new synchro partner this year so you're spending like and then when you train together, do you like have to spend like lots time with that person every year?

**TOM DALEY** [00:42:45] Yeah. "cause-. So he recently just moved to, he moved to London last, not last October but the October before. So we've been diving together for like 15 months now. So it's relatively new. In terms of diving partnership. But, you know, we get on really well. We're best mates. So it's really easy just to like.

**JVN** [00:43:00] Oh, that's cute.

**TOM DALEY** [00:43:01] Yeah. So we hang outside of diving as well. So it's easy for us to do that.

**JVN** [00:43:05] I love that.

**TOM DALEY** [00:43:06] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:43:06] So then. Okay. The world's, I'm almost done. So then the World Series is that kind of like. Because I always say like the, you know, the ice grant or the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating is kind of like the NFL, like for ice skating. I mean, is that there's like a league and you go to each competition and like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:43:17] That's the World Series.

**JVN** [00:43:18] Is like, yeah, so is it like, is it like the top six go to like the final or something?

**TOM DALEY** [00:43:21] Yeah. So they have like a. So from the world championships, they take the top eight individual divers and the top six synchro teams and they go from. So this year we're starting in Montreal and then we go to Beijing and then we go to Kazan, Russia, and then it finishes off at London. So the last one is London. 27 to 29th of March or something like that. So, yeah.

**JVN** [00:43:44] So wait. So world already happened this year?

**TOM DALEY** [00:43:47] So. World-, takes it from the world championships last year. So and then they also go, then they'll take it from the Olympics this year for next year's World Series. So it's like the super finals, if you like.

**JVN** [00:43:57] Yeah yeah yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:43:57] And they have an overall winner who gets the most high placing, etc.

**JVN** [00:44:02] Right. Cute. So do you like that series or is like, oh my god, so much traveling? You've been like doing it for a long time now, right?

**TOM DALEY** [00:44:08] I mean it's-. Traveling is different now, especially with Robbie. Like I miss my son a lot when I travel, obviously, but it's.

**JVN** [00:44:12] Can you say like the British-, can you be like, I don't want to do that World Series. I just want to do the the Olympics. Like, are you like maneuver ever? You're like really good, and that gives you seniority or something?

**TOM DALEY** [00:44:20] Can't really say-, but can't really do it just because, like, I have to still prove myself that I'm still at the highest level so that I don't get taken off the team. So. It's just a matter, you know.

**JVN** [00:44:30] Oh ok, I get it. That's good. Keep your honest. Keep you honest.

**TOM DALEY** [00:44:31] Yeah.

**JVN** [00:44:31] But wait. So then we gotta end up-, 'cause I feel like I would be like, who am I if I-. You are a LGBTQ hero. You're someone who has grown up in the public eye. But I think to shoulder the pressures of being out and being a young father and being a competitive athlete is so immense and it's so incredible. And I look up to you so much. I mean, it's just so, it's incredible.

**TOM DALEY** [00:44:54] Aw, thank you.

**JVN** [00:44:54] But do you think that living-? How has being out and, you know, living publicly as an ath-, has that affected your-? I think, I feel like I'm friends with Gus. I feel like I've seen people be like really vitriolic to him. Like at-. Did you notice the difference? Like pre and post coming out? Or like when you came out? Did you'd feel like? I know it's like an intense question to end up on but like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:45:18] No but I remember coming out, my coming out sto-, like my family knew that I'd met Lance from, in May 2013. Because we met in March. And we then in May, I told my friends and my family so they knew for a long time. And I kind of just I got so sick of people always asking like, "Oh, so do you have a girlfriend? Do you have a girlfriend"? And I was just been like, "No, I don't have a girlfriend". And kind of would just dodge around the subject. And it wasn't until a journalist printed, when I said they asked me, "Oh, what do you think about your gay following"? And I was like, "Oh, it's really cool". You know and what-. And then they were like, "Why do you think they, you have such a big gay following"? I was like, "Probably because I'm half

naked most of the time". And then she's like, "What do you think of the people that think that you're gay"? And I said, "Well, what does it matter"? It's, you know-.

**JVN** [00:46:12] How old are you this time?

**TOM DALEY** [00:46:13] I was 19 and they printed in the newspaper. "Tom Daley: I am not gay". And I remember seeing that. And I was so hurt by that because, you know, it's one thing to dodge around the subject, but to have someone print something that you are so adamantly against what that, what it means to you to be a member of the LGBT community is something that was so-.

**JVN** [00:46:41] 'Cause you didn't say, "I'm not gay".

**TOM DALEY** [00:46:42] No.

**JVN** [00:46:42] You were just like that's great that they are probably because I have a great torso and I'm always like-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:46:46] Like who cares what people think? Like, it doesn't matter anyway.

**JVN** [00:46:49] Yeah.

**TOM DALEY** [00:46:50] And so they took that as that. And I remember in the next few weeks I was like, alright, I'm gonna come out because, you know, I don't want people thinking that I'm ashamed of anything because, you know, there's so many young kids that I've seen and struggle with their sexuality and struggle, especially in a sport environment. And I didn't have anyone to look up to and think, oh, you know why it's actually okay to be gay and be in sport and still be able to be the best you and still have no impact on what you're doing as a sports person. And I was so terrified that day when I uploaded that YouTube video. I was so scared of what the people were gonna think. If people were gonna hate me, if I was gonna lose all of my like following, all of my, you know, sponsorship deals, like I thought, you know, you, make you feel like the world's gonna end. And I was, you know, welcomed so warmly, so much more than I could ever have imagined. And, you know, it just felt so great to be, well for people to know me like it's not like I changed. They just then actually knew everything about me. And that's kind of why Lance and I live our life quite publicly is because, you know, I, if I was a little boy, you know, if I was a 7 year old diver that was starting and felt different, felt less than, felt like an outsider to see a family or see an athlete in their sport come out and be them and still rock on and still have the best time, I think is something that I would have really, I think it really would have helped me have a lot less, you know, growing up was rough, knowing that you were different. And I think the more people in sport that can come out and the more people in every, every, you know, there's such power in telling your personal story and telling, you know, how you feel and who you love. And it shouldn't matter. And I know we might in hundreds of years time, get to a point where people don't care either way. But I think it's really important to, you know, tell your personal story because you have no idea how much you can help anyone.

**JVN** [00:49:00] I just couldn't agree with you anymore. And your so incredible for telling your story. And I just dropped my pen, but I thank you so much for sharing your story. And I-.

**TOM DALEY** [00:49:07] No, thank you.

**JVN** [00:49:07] So brave and so strong and I can't act well. I hate to say that it's "so brave" because it's really just courageous and beautiful, and I think that you are just absolutely right. You give, you know, when you give your story like that, you give so much hope and just so much joy to so many people that just don't want to feel bothered.

**TOM DALEY** [00:49:22] Well, thank you.

**JVN** [00:49:22] Yeah, it's beautiful. So thank you much for your time.

**TOM DALEY** [00:49:24] No, thank you for having me, it was so much fun.

**JVN** [00:49:26] I can't wait to see you slay in 2020, honey.

[00:49:28] Yeah. Thank you.

[00:49:28] Yeah!

[00:49:29] We'll have to get you in the pool soon, too. I want to see that one and a half.

**JVN** [00:49:31] If we can just, maybe just an inward one.

**TOM DALEY** [00:49:34] OK, fine.

**JVN** [00:49:35] And I'm going foot first.

**TOM DALEY** [00:49:35] OK. We'll do that.

**JVN** [00:49:36] I don't want to break my face. It's my money maker, you know what I'm saying?

**TOM DALEY** [00:49:39] I get you, I get you.

**JVN** [00:49:43] You've been listening to "Getting Curious" with me, Jonathan Van Ness, my guest this week was Tom Daley. You'll find links to his work and the episode description of whatever you're listening to the show on. Our theme music is "Freak" by Quin. Thank you so much to her for letting us use it. If you enjoyed our show, introduce a friend and show them how to subscribe please! Follow us on Instagram and Twitter at CuriousWithJVN. Our socials are run and curated by Emily Bossak. "Getting Curious" is produced by me, Julie Carrillo, Emily Bossak, Rae Ellis, Chelsea Jacobson and Colin Anderson.