

PURSUE YOUR PASSION

WITH STEFAN RANDIG

- Luca Malaguti: [00:00:09](#) Welcome to the Alchemy Podcast, everybody. My name is Luca Malaguti. I will be your host. I'm gonna apologize for my raspy voice. I'm currently in Dahab and training with the crew here at Touchdown, and something has been going around, as is usual in Dahab, Egypt. So my voice is a little bit raspy, uh, but it is my complete and utter pleasure to introduce to you our guest today. None other than Stephan Randig. Stephan is a German record holder, an incredibly deep freediver, specializes in no fins. He can go up to 80 meters in no fins. He's gone beyond a hundred meters in the disciplines of monofin diving. Stephan has been all around the world from Egypt to the Philippines, we're used to own and run the famous school Freedive Panglao just before selling it. He sold it just before Covid, which was amazing timing. We were all there during that time. And, um, we are gonna chat with him today.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:01:39](#) Welcome everybody. My name is Luca Malaguti. I am the, um, host of the Alchemy Podcast. Um, the goal of this podcast is to just have honest, open, uh, unformal informal conversations with some of the best freedivers in the world, and also some of the best athletes in the world overall. People that just have completely dedicated their lives to, um, something they love and, uh, have achieved great things by doing so. And, uh, today I'm with Stefan Randig, aka the German machine. <laugh>, I believe that is your nickname, <laugh>?
- Stefan Randig: [00:02:20](#) I'm not sure.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:02:21](#) No? Okay.
- Stefan Randig: [00:02:23](#) Well, well, I'm from Germany. That's true. <laugh>.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:02:25](#) I've heard it before a couple of times.
- Stefan Randig: [00:02:27](#) Really?

Luca Malaguti: [00:02:27](#) Yes. The German machine.

Stefan Randig: [00:02:29](#) It's the first time I hear that <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [00:02:30](#) Is it?

Stefan Randig: [00:02:33](#) I know the Austrian robot, but the Austrian robot is Herbert.

Luca Malaguti: [00:02:37](#) I'm pretty sure you're the German machine. One thing that blew my mind and, and it taught me a lot, and we didn't know each other back, back then very well. I mean, maybe we had just said hello and stuff couple of times, but there was a competition in the blue hole. And, um, you know, I was looking at Gary, another freediver I really admire, and I was like, "wow, Gary's like, wow, he's doing really good, he's doing three times 92". This was a competition in April, 2021. And, and you, you just came out of nowhere and you just totally annihilated the competition and, and you were so humble about how you received your, the award, the first prize,

Stefan Randig: [00:03:24](#) It was 2021.

Luca Malaguti: [00:03:25](#) It was 2021 April, 2021 competition, the blue hole. And for me, that was really, it was, uh, it was really inspiring and it was really cool. I was like, I want to be that guy. I wanna be the guy that just nobody sees coming. Shows up, does his thing, does it with style, and then just grabs the first prize and, and goes home to his, his wife and kid, and just, I wanna be that guy. You know?

Stefan Randig: [00:03:49](#) I think that was like probably the first comp after the, after a long break of, of the pandemic and Covid lockdowns. And I remember like being like super staked about just being able to compete again and, and to train and yeah, it was, it was a very nice competition, that one. Mm-hmm.

Luca Malaguti: [00:04:10](#) In the blue hole.

Stefan Randig: [00:04:11](#) Mm-hmm.

Luca Malaguti: [00:04:12](#) It's true. Absolutely. Yes. Yeah. April, 2021. So we hadn't, we hadn't done competitions in a while. Yeah. But the only one you did before was probably 2019.

Stefan Randig: [00:04:25](#) Yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:04:26](#) Um, so yeah. Um, it's, it's great too to have a good conversation with you today, Stefan. And there's a few topics I'd love to talk about today, including, uh, athleticism and freediving competitions, how to have a family life balance and freediving. I think there's a big talk, a big conversation I've had with a lot of people because,

um, I, I personally, I want to learn from people that have done it because I want to have a family and I want to keep going down this road. And the big questions that come to mind that are mental blocks are, why are you still doing this if you think you want to have a family?

- Stefan Randig: [00:05:03](#) How does it affect your diving?
- Luca Malaguti: [00:05:05](#) How is it affecting your diving? Exactly. And so I think we can kind of start there because it's a lovely conversation. Uh, somebody I admire a lot is Enchante Gallardo. Have you met her?
- Stefan Randig: [00:05:16](#) Yeah. Yeah.
- New Speaker: [00:05:17](#) She is just amazing. She's amazing, amazing athlete. Total badass woman.
- Stefan Randig: [00:05:21](#) Yeah.
- New Speaker: [00:05:21](#) She has two children, and here she is living in Hawaii, but also balancing...
- Stefan Randig: [00:05:26](#) I don't know how she does it, you know, like you said, she's such an amazing athlete, super humble and, um, so strong. And then still a mother as well, so that's amazing. Yeah.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:05:38](#) She's a single mother. That's, that's even more fascinating, right? She's a single mother with two children, and yet she has this amazing, uh, ability to balance things. And of course, I've spoken to her. She has a huge support from her family. So that's essential to have that community. Um, but it's not easy. It's definitely not easy.
- Stefan Randig: [00:06:01](#) Yeah. Also, I guess because in deep diving, what you need is peace of mind. And, uh, the more things you have going on, uh, in your life, then deep diving becomes, becomes difficult now. Like, you need to be at, at ease, like mentally, you know? So yeah, finding that balance, um, like Enchante did, it's pretty amazing to see.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:06:29](#) How, how do you define peace of mind?
- Stefan Randig: [00:06:33](#) Uh, it's hard to say how to, how to give a definition, but, um, basically being in the water, um, without, and, and being able to enjoy the dives, you know? Um, and, uh, yeah, it's actually difficult to give together definition, but just being like free of, of worries and, um, and just being able to enjoy diving and training. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:07:09](#) The question I wanted to ask you was, have you, do you disconnect when you go in the water from your land life, or we can call it the terrestrial life, the, the three-

dimensional world we, we habitat as, you know, land creatures, when you go in the water, do you completely disconnect from that? And, and then we can talk about whether that's a good or a bad thing later, <laugh>. Yeah. But I mean, is there, is there another element that that allows you to enter that peace of mind?

- Stefan Randig: [00:07:43](#) Um, I think I disconnect. I, I'm not sure, like, what I definitely noticed is that I'm able to leave a lot of things in the water. Um, so I noticed that, and I think a lot of freedivers feel like this. If you have problems or there's worries or like moments of stress in your life when you dive, um, it makes you feel a lot better. So, um, yeah, I think just spending time in the water, um, helps. Maybe, maybe not this with, with disconnecting, but just like, like for me, it puts just everything else into perspective, you know? Like, you, you go for a deep dive and then you notice like, actually, you know, the problems I have are not, that are not that, uh, it's, I can, if I can manage this, what I'm doing here, yes. I can manage anything else, you know?
- Luca Malaguti: [00:08:44](#) So perspective is one. Because you're doing something that's difficult that requires presence and being in the moment that pushes your body and your mind to the limit or whatever your limit is perceived as. Anything else in life you think I can, I can handle this?
- Stefan Randig: [00:09:03](#) Yeah, I think so. Yeah.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:09:06](#) Super cool. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> super cool. There's a, there's a term in, in psychology called "distress tolerance".
- Stefan Randig: [00:09:13](#) Okay.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:09:14](#) I was listening to a psychologist and a TED talk referring to this, and I was like, oh, distress tolerance. That's a catchy term. It's pretty cool. And she defined it as the correlation, the scientific correlation between the ability to hold your breath, so breath holding in general and enduring difficult moments in your life. So pain, suffering, loss, death, the worst possible outcomes that life gives us. The direct correlation between the two people that can hold their breath and are calm in doing so, or can also be more comfortable and more emotionally in control during incredibly difficult situations.
- Stefan Randig: [00:09:56](#) Yeah, I totally agree.
- New Speaker: [00:09:57](#) You agree with that?
- Stefan Randig: [00:09:58](#) Yeah. Yeah, for sure. I think, uh, yeah, because maybe not only freediving, but at less athletic performances in

general, you expose yourself to stress. Yes. Even though it's maybe a positive type of stress, but it's still a stressful situation. And, uh, um, yeah, you probably over time like really adapt and, and build up some type of tolerance. And I notice for myself, like the training we do, not only in the water, but the training we do in general, how it really affects, um, everyday life situations that are difficult. And I've had a lot of situations where that are stressful or, um, and I'm, I'm just able to focus much, much better, um, and take things with a smile, you know?

- Luca Malaguti: [00:10:54](#) Do you have an example, like...
- Stefan Randig: [00:10:56](#) You know, like, um, you know, like for example, accidents, like an accident happens or something and you're much more focused, um, or, um, just like stressful situations and everyday life.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:11:12](#) With family, friends. Yeah.
- Stefan Randig: [00:11:14](#) Things like that.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:11:19](#) Because you, you lived in the Philippines, you had a, an awesome school Freedive Panglao in the Philippines. Having lived and done some business myself in the Philippines, it's incredibly stressful.
- Stefan Randig: [00:11:28](#) Can be <laugh>.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:11:30](#) 8:00 AM I'd be like, Walter, where the, where are you? You're the bull man this morning. We talked about it yesterday. Uh, sorry sir. Uh, you know, it was fiesta yesterday. Fiesta every week. I got drunk and it was fiesta. You know, it's like that kind of honesty and you're like, oh, you're frustrated, but you gotta okay, it's okay. Be patient. You know, if you get mad, that's what I love about the Filipinos. They're so honest, but if you get mad at them, they don't like to lose face. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, you gotta stay calm and teaches you patience. Like, okay, Walter, just don't let it happen again, please. Tomorrow morning, <laugh>. So some difficult situations that you can encounter every day. Just breathe <laugh>, just breathe, reset the nervous system. And having, having had one of the top freediving schools in Philippines, I can imagine you went through a lot of stress.
- Stefan Randig: [00:12:30](#) I mean, most of the time it was, um, it was really good fun, you know, running the business. And, um, but yeah, a thousand little things every day, you know, <laugh> and, uh, I mean, I did notice, um, that it affected my own training and family life as well. Um, so that was also one of the reasons why we decided to, uh, to come back here to Dahab, just because I prefer to work on a much smaller scale. Okay. Um, and I can schedule my work kind of

around training and, uh, can take time off when I want to, can travel when I want to. Um, so yeah, it's really nice to be here and be able to structure training properly because in the Philippines, it was basically a day off here and there and you squeeze in a little bit of training and it was not structured at all.

- Luca Malaguti: [00:13:32](#) So it was having an effect on your family, for example...
- Stefan Randig: [00:13:35](#) That also.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:13:38](#) Because you had to run a business fit in your training, and then people wanted some coaching.
- Stefan Randig: [00:13:43](#) That was a lot.
- Stefan Randig: [00:13:43](#) And then whatever is left over goes to your family. I think I listened to Jordan Peterson the other day, uh, one of my favorite psychologists mm-hmm. <affirmative>, uh, say, you know, when you have a family, I'm not there yet, but you know, that's why I'm, I want to know more about this stuff. Yeah. Um, when you have a family, like a third is to your wife, a third is to your child or children, and then there's a third left, which is supposed to be for, you know, business and everything else. Do you, do you ever feel like it was that at times or that those thirds were maybe being sacrificed in some moments?
- Stefan Randig: [00:14:22](#) Um, I think like we are with, with my family, like, it's a, a very special situation because like freediving was always there for me, and diving was always there for my wife as well. Um, teaching scuba, um, being a technical diver. And, um, so when our daughter was born, she was kind of born into the, this whole environment and family life often just happened in the dive center, you know, um, amazing. So I guess, uh, I'm really lucky with that, you know, um, not having to separate family and diving, um, too much. Like my daughter, she has always been in the dive center around top freedivers. Like, for her, this is very normal, you know? Yeah. Um, so that made things or makes things a lot easier.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:15:18](#) How old is your daughter now?
- Stefan Randig: [00:15:19](#) She's nine now.
- New Speaker: [00:15:21](#) And she still loves the water?
- Stefan Randig: [00:15:23](#) For sure. Um, like I'm, I'm slowly trying to, so I'm slowly trying to, to get her to, to freedive a little bit mm-hmm. <affirmative>, but she's really very much into swimming. Okay. So she's very passionate about swimming and just spending time in the water. When it comes to freediving. Uh, she's like, she doesn't enjoy it that much yet, but for

me, like I'm just, for me, it's important that she's comfortable in the water, you know, that she's not, uh, scared of the water and then everything else will come later.

- Luca Malaguti: [00:15:57](#) She'll find that at her own time. At her own pace. Yeah. Her own way.
- Stefan Randig: [00:16:00](#) And you know, like, also I'm always trying to imagine how it is for her because like for us, at some point in our life, like freediving appeared and then it's like this magical thing. Yeah. And for her, like, she has it around her since she was born. So maybe it's not that of a special thing, you know? I don't know. <laugh>
- Luca Malaguti: [00:16:20](#) Yeah. Maybe she might discover the office life in eight to 10 years and she might be like, what? This is so cool. I mean, she has, why aren't you guys now working downtown Tokyo? 85 hours a week. This is awesome. <laugh>, right? Who knows? I know, it's silly to say, but...
- Stefan Randig: [00:16:35](#) I remember like, she's been in, uh, her little donuts, inflatable donuts, uh, watching, uh, competitions, uh, when she was, I don't know, four or five years old. Um, and she could barely talk and she would say, oh, look, Papa blackout, <laugh>. So like, she has been around these things.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:16:52](#) She's already a judge. She already has the...
- Stefan Randig: [00:16:54](#) Half of a judge. Yeah. <laugh>.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:16:57](#) Because cuz you come, you, you're German and your wife is Japanese.
- Stefan Randig: [00:17:03](#) Yeah.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:17:04](#) And your background, what, what did you do before freediving?
- Luca Malaguti: [00:17:08](#) Scuba diving before that? School?
- Stefan Randig: [00:17:13](#) Yeah. No, actually, um, I finished school, and then I have an education as a, a wood sculptor. Um, my plans were to go into renovation and, um, and then I took some time off and came here to Dahab and I got stuck here diving <laugh>, and that's the end of the story, <laugh>.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:17:37](#) Well, I was going with this is, is you coming from a place like Germany, there was pressure to conform to that society?
- Stefan Randig: [00:17:45](#) Yeah. Like, I mean, it was not easy in the beginning with this whole diving thing. Um, I remember like when I came

to Hab 2005, 2006 and I started diving and then my family was like, okay, give him some time. He's gonna mm-hmm. <affirmative>, yeah. Come back to his senses. Um, and then it was one year, two years, three years. And at some point there was a little bit this, uh, like, you know, a little bit of pressure from my family saying, okay, like, you need to get your together, you know, <laugh>, um, and

Luca Malaguti: [00:18:14](#)

You're like, watch this. And you just went to...

Stefan Randig: [00:18:16](#)

Yeah, no. Then, uh, um, I think the first time when my family was like, like kind of accepted that this is what I'm going to do now, was when I, I got a contract working in the Philippines in scuba. Then it was a, it was a contract working in the Maldives and, um, in a nice resort. And then my family was like, okay, this is not bad. You know, and then started, uh, freediving. And, and it is still not easy. Like, um, and I think a lot of freediving athletes that compete and dive deep maybe feel in, in a similar way. Like for me, this is really interesting to, to hear how it goes for other free divers. But, um, with our parents, you know, like what they think about this whole thing. And I think for a lot of parents, it's not that easy to see their kids dive deep and, um, like, yeah, I've had a lot of conversations, especially with my father, you know, he said...

Luca Malaguti: [00:19:22](#)

He thinks it's dangerous...

Stefan Randig: [00:19:22](#)

He thinks it's dangerous. And, you know, why, why do this? You have, you have a family now, you are a father. Um, why, why risk it? You know, the, the thing is like what he sees or what, what people from the outside see is just like these top performances and that's all they see. Like, they don't see the thousands of dives, um, behind these performances. Um, so I think for someone looking from the outside, it always looks like, okay, we just try and do this hundred meter dive, you know, and see how it goes. They don't know like that we've been progressing there meter by meter. And by the time we do these dives, like it's, it's just another dive, you know, it's not like, okay, I'm gonna try to break this record now. This is really hard to explain, I think, to someone who's not, um, uh, who doesn't have so much insight into the sport. Um, but yeah, I mean, it's been, it's been a few years now and my family's has accepted everything I do and, um, they know that I'm a safe diver and, um, yeah. I wouldn't do anything stupid.

Luca Malaguti: [00:20:40](#)

Dive Eye hasn't been good to parents that have a little understanding of free diving. Dive Eye is good only in big competitions. And people that don't understand what's going on, they see you free, fall into the abyss, are like, are you mad? Why are you doing that? It's a two-edged sword.

Stefan Randig: [00:21:08](#) Like, for us it's super cool to see all our friends compete but then, uh, I'm sure there is a lot of people watching who just don't understand like, what's the point <laugh> and why expose yourself to that type of danger.

Luca Malaguti: [00:21:26](#) Exactly. Which is also a two-edged sword on itself. I've noticed. Because on one hand it's wrong. We know free diving is not an extreme sport. Not anymore. At least no limits being not as popular. But at the other hand, when our clients, our students perceive freediving as being cool and badass and extreme, even though they're just doing an 801 <laugh>. It's good for us cuz we sell like Yeah. Yeah. Free diving is pretty cool and it's like much cooler than scuba. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Come, come, come join the dark side. It's true. Right? It does help to sell tickets to speak in a way. Um, I say this especially because I teach in North America where there's even less of an understanding of apnea as a culture.

Stefan Randig: [00:22:15](#) Yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:22:16](#) Less just very small understanding of what free diving as a sport is. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Um, I really like what you said about the why, because externally people will look at what you're doing and I mean, you've done some really solid, solid deep dives and people will say, why, but have you ever had that question internally rise, rise up?

Stefan Randig: [00:22:43](#) Of course I'm thinking about it all the time and I'm still trying to come up with a, with an answer. Um, and I think my answer has also changed over the years. Like, why am I doing, like, like why am I doing this? Um, yeah, I'm not sure. I mean, in the end it's all about pleasure, right? We all want to do something that makes us happy. So, um, on the end of the day, it's an activity that just makes us happy. Um, but it's this, uh, risk and reward thing. Like why expose yourself to something dangerous just to feel that rush of happiness afterwards. And yeah, I mean it's tricky. I, I don't know, it's just, uh, I don't really have a really smart answer here. Like, um, is like, for me, I'm just obsessed with the sensations on the water. Um, I have to say like...

New Speaker: [00:23:44](#) That's well said. Yeah.

Stefan Randig: [00:23:47](#) Um, and um, and over the years, like it's, it's been a while now and it, it doesn't, it, it, over the years it's, it's getting more like I feel that I want to do more of this and, um, it gives me purpose in life, I would say. Um, which in one way, um, is something I'm really happy about. Like, freediving gives me this purpose, but on the other hand, also, sometimes I worry like, I don't want to attach, I don't want to attach myself too much to this thing, you know, to this activity. Because what happens if one day I'm not

able to freedive anymore? You know, then what? And now you have attached all your happiness to something that might just not be there anymore tomorrow, you know? That's true.

Luca Malaguti: [00:24:38](#)

Absolutely.

Stefan Randig: [00:24:39](#)

Um, but I've talked about this with, with Gary in The Bahamas as well and, and, uh, yeah, I liked his answer. He was like, yeah, you're right. But still <laugh>, it's just something incredible and, um, gonna do this for as long as I can, you know...

Luca Malaguti: [00:24:58](#)

The mountaineer can say the same thing. Uh, what if my knees don't work anymore? Yeah. What is my relationship with the mountain? What is my purpose and what is the meaning of my existence?

Stefan Randig: [00:25:12](#)

I think like, even if one day it might also be that maybe I lose motivation to dive deep, you know, it might also happen, but I think there will always be this relation with the water and that might change. So maybe it's deep diving today mm-hmm. <affirmative> training and all of that. And maybe in 20 years I'm just gonna go for a 20 minute snorkel in the morning. Um, but there will always be that relation with the water, I think. And I think this just gives purpose, you know?

Luca Malaguti: [00:25:43](#)

Absolutely.

Stefan Randig: [00:25:44](#)

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.

Luca Malaguti: [00:25:44](#)

Yeah. That's very, I think that's very important to be able to answer those questions, especially when the big why with capital letters comes into your mind. Why am I doing this? What is the purpose? What is the meaning behind this?

Stefan Randig: [00:25:57](#)

I'm always thinking about this because it's a question that especially non-freedivers ask all the time. Why? Um, and I've had so many situations, um, even during dives where I tell myself, yeah, this is my why <laugh>, you know, like just like certain situations that are just incredible. Um, I had this, this amazing dive with, uh, with Alenka, well it's like 10 days ago. Where we just did a dive together down to 50 meters and we just spent like 10 seconds in front of the arch just looking at the arch. Um, and you know, we both came, came up with a little bit of water in the mask, <laugh>. And uh, and that's one of those moments where I was like, yeah, that's, that's the why you knows.

Luca Malaguti: [00:26:50](#)

Absolutely. Yeah. But there is another side to this why that I wanted to ask you, right? Because you specialize in no fins. I would say you specialize in no fins, but you're also

very good in other disciplines. Uh, I know people come see you specifically to train no fins, cuz that's one, one of your best.

Stefan Randig: [00:27:10](#) I enjoy the most.

Luca Malaguti: [00:27:11](#) You enjoy the most. Yeah. Which is also the hardest. No fins for the people that don't know what that is. It's literally just swimming down on one breath with your hands and your feet mm-hmm. <affirmative> like you would in a pool. But you're going down and you've done 77 meters in competition. And you want to push into the eighties. Has there ever been a situation where the why came into your mind and you're just like, why the am I doing this <laugh> this? Coming up, and maybe it wasn't a good dive, you weren't feeling good and, and and, and the why all of a sudden was had more of a negative side to it. Does that ever happen to you?

Stefan Randig: [00:27:52](#) Um, I mean, yeah, there's always days where, um, maybe dives don't feel as pleasurable, but I have to say like, um, especially with no fins, because really I put a lot of work into those dives mm-hmm. <affirmative>, I have to say, like they mentally they're quite consistent. Okay. Um, so it's not like I'm, I'm freaking out on one dive and the next dive it's pure bliss. Um, like they're quite, quite consistent. But I definitely felt, um, I, I had, I've done I think three sessions where I had the rope at 80. And wanted to go for that dive. And for me it's kind of a big one, um, where my mind started to go, um, a little crazy. And when you like, and, and if I, if I start to overthink the dive, I know that I'm, I'm not really ready for it, you know? So I still want to, um, take my time with that number because I don't want to have a dive where I am underwater and have this thought of why am I doing this? Like, what's the point? This is not fun. You know? Yeah. Um, so that's the, I'm I'm really grateful that I have the opportunity to dive pretty much all the time. So, um, I think one of the reasons why my progress has been so super slow over the last 15 years was because I really take my time and if a dive doesn't feel right, I don't do it. Um, so progress has been really slow, but I have to say that the majority of my dives are really, um, good experiences, you know?

Luca Malaguti: [00:29:42](#) Okay. That's, that's a good approach. And and that's why I love that hearing that and people like you and Gary have taken.

Stefan Randig: [00:29:49](#) Yeah. It is, it is I think a healthy approach, but sometimes, um, I wish maybe to have a bit more of a, an athletic approach, like to push through certain situations, you know, like I see that with fellow athletes and where they say like, okay, like look at the dive as as an athletic performance. And you know, there are situations where

you push through discomfort and things like this. But, um, I don't know. Like for me, I've just gotten used to a certain type of diving where I, if, if the dive is not, not a hundred percent, but if it's not like really close to perfect, then I just don't do it. Which is why I have so many early turns and even in competition cause I just don't want to have a, a bad experience. You, I want to have have good dives.

- Luca Malaguti: [00:30:51](#) Because a bad dive and, and, and having, being down there and coming up, let's say from depth no fins and having that, why am I doing this is not feeling I should have turned. It is a minor form of trauma. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, that's truly what it is. And some people are okay with that repetitive trauma. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> cause of background, because of life circumstances, they can endure it. And other people, they just don't, they don't want to compromise everything else. The purpose and the meaning we just described. Cause then it puts everything into question.
- Stefan Randig: [00:31:24](#) I think I'm also becoming more and more careful with every season because I, I still, I've never had a blackout, so I always think like it one day it happens and it probably will. How is it gonna be, you know, is it gonna really be this big trauma like you mentioned? Uh, is it gonna set me back and yeah. Become this really difficult thing to overcome? And I have like really great respect, um, uh, when it comes to this, uh, whole blackout thing. So that's why I'm like, the deeper I go now that I'm starting to be really careful with the dives <laugh>.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:32:01](#) But let's also be honest, there's a bit of pride and a bit of ego to that statement too. I mean, to be able to say, I've been diving for 15 years and I've never had a blackout. That's not only impressive, that's not only the right way to educate, but it's also like a point of pride. It is, it's amazing. Yeah. I mean, he were to get to a hundred meters and never blackout. It's impressive.
- Stefan Randig: [00:32:24](#) Yeah. I mean, I've had blackouts in the pool, so yeah. That's the pool, but it's the pool.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:32:30](#) <laugh>.
- Stefan Randig: [00:32:32](#) Yeah.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:32:34](#) Um, when you're down there, have you ever had a point where you, let's say you had a dive where you turned, because in fact, um, even with your focus and your experience, you, you thought about, um, you had the why in mind, but you did think about, let's say your daughter, you know, that that thought came into mind and you, you, you, you saw yourself maybe putting yourself at risk or, or, or feeling scared in a certain situation because maybe

you're putting something at risk that you shouldn't. Have you ever had that experience?

- Stefan Randig: [00:33:13](#) Um, yeah. No. So that was really interesting when my, my wife was pregnant and we knew we were gonna have a, a child. And um, so that time I was already diving, um, quite deep. And then I thought, okay, how is this now going to change, um, everything and is it going to change my approach or the way I feel underwater? And, and I have to say like, to be honest, it didn't really change much. Um, it didn't, so I, I don't think that I ever had a situation underwater where I thought, okay, now I, I'm not going to do this because of my family. Because I think before that I was already always like a very careful diver. And, um, even not being a father, I felt like, um, I don't want to, um, like there's no need to put myself in any unnecessary, expose myself to unnecessary risk, you know? So yeah, I was quite surprised to see that actually in the end, it didn't make so much difference in terms of how I approach, um, diving. Okay. There was maybe a bit more of this whole like, um, thing of like having responsibility, like, like having to provide for a family, taking care of family. And so training was maybe then not first priority anymore, but work is work.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:34:47](#) You're responsible for other people.
- Stefan Randig: [00:34:48](#) So, so, so that, like, that was a big change. Um, but yeah,
- Luca Malaguti: [00:34:55](#) In terms of how you approach depth in terms of facing the fears, which sometimes come up when approaching depth,
- Stefan Randig: [00:35:03](#) No, maybe even more the other way around. Like, uh, way around. Okay. Um, you know, like family life, for me it's, it's a great balance to training and exposing yourself to these stresses and then coming home to a family. It's just for me, like, um, it's just a very positive thing. And I think it really helped me. I, I notice it when I travel for competitions. Like this year when I was in, in The Bahamas, I spent five weeks there. Um, I really miss that, you know, I miss the family life and, um,
- Luca Malaguti: [00:35:37](#) Oh, you weren't there with your family.
- Stefan Randig: [00:35:38](#) Yeah, I was alone there. I spent the, the time in the house with Gary, which was super nice and it was fun, but...
- Luca Malaguti: [00:35:44](#) Is good because you're around people.
- Stefan Randig: [00:35:47](#) Yeah. But you know, being surrounded by freediving 24 hours. Yes. Um, after five weeks, it was just very intense, you know? And I wish to have like a bit of just family time,

you know, just something different and just to loosen up mentally.

- Luca Malaguti: [00:36:03](#) That's interesting. Cause I've talked to a lot of top end athletes, one being one of the best ice climbers in the world, and they would say disconnecting from your family when you're going to the Wimbledon of freediving competitions, the vertical blue competition where you spent tons of money and time to get there is actually a good thing almost. Cause, and this is where the next topic we're gonna get into, the selfishness is almost required. Did you feel that way or Actually no, because you've, you've got such a good life balance with your, with your wife and your child that you actually compliment you.
- Stefan Randig: [00:36:38](#) I'm so, I'm so used to like, we have a, a very strong daily routine, you know? Yes. So, and I think family life is a big part of it. Eating together, spending time together. And then in between my training and it's all kind of, um, um, connected somehow and then, um, to be somewhere else without family and just focus on diving. Um, yeah, like I notice like one or two weeks is actually kind of nice because I feel like, okay, now I'm really, there's no more distractions. It's just training. But then I start to miss them and then, um, I feel like something's missing, you know?
- Luca Malaguti: [00:37:19](#) Okay. That's good. So, so you've established, like, which is different for everybody of course.
- Stefan Randig: [00:37:23](#) And I think that's why it works so well with the family because um, yeah. Somehow it, it really works well for us to like that. It's like training and work and family. It's all kind of connected, you know?
- Luca Malaguti: [00:37:40](#) Absolutely. That's good. It's good. But, but those two weeks is not a bad period in terms of...
- Stefan Randig: [00:37:47](#) Like, one or two weeks. And it also then it, because we spend so much time together, um, sometimes being apart for 1, 2, 3 weeks mm-hmm. <affirmative>, then you really look forward to, to seeing each other again. And um, so I think that's also sometimes it is quite nice.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:38:08](#) So you never experienced any, as an athlete, when you're focusing on yourself, you tell yourself, look, I've, I've dedicated so much time, money, resources on this upcoming event. Competition means a lot to me. I'm going to be selfish for two weeks, let's say. But I use that word lightly of course. In whichever way you mm-hmm. <affirmative>, you, you embody that word. Uh, you know, I'm not saying not talking to your family for two weeks, of course. Um, but there's no guilt that, that's cuz cuz if you hold your breath and you dive and there's some sort of guilt, I don't think that's good in any way. So you never

feel you've, you feel you've got a good word, uh, balance that even if you can take two weeks to yourself, you won't feel guilty cuz your family knows what you're doing and they're there to support you.

- Stefan Randig: [00:38:53](#) Well, first of all, I would say like my family and my wife, they're like super supportive. So, so they are actually sometimes the ones pushing me to say, go do this.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:39:02](#) That's amazing. Which makes you very lucky. Because most people it's not like that.
- Stefan Randig: [00:39:06](#) It's usually for me sometimes who I say like, what do you think? And yeah. Could this be an event? And it's usually a wife that says, go do it. You know, go do it. And together we look at it at free diving competitions, almost like kind of an investment, you know, we know that going there and performing in some form way is gonna come back. In terms of students, exposure.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:39:30](#) Yes.
- Stefan Randig: [00:39:30](#) Um, so maybe that sounds a little strange now, but it's really like this. No, especially with the dive eye and um, there is a lot of nice feedback that comes, um, from people that watch.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:39:43](#) Sponsorships, people supporting you. Absolutely.
- Stefan Randig: [00:39:45](#) So in the end, it's a good thing, you know, um,
- Luca Malaguti: [00:39:49](#) It worked for Gary. Look, you know, you lost all his gear. He went on Instagram, started crying and people supported him. Gary, if you're listening to this, we love you and we know, you know, we're joking around.
- Stefan Randig: [00:40:03](#) Yeah. So it is a lot of money and time spent, but I, I think it, it's some, in some way it comes back to us, you know, these, with these competitions.
- Luca Malaguti: [00:40:18](#) Absolutely. Yeah, for sure. Because I came across this and I thought of you. Okay. And, uh, I'm just gonna translate it. Originally, the book is in English, it's called The Art of the Impossible, from the same author who wrote The Rise of Superman. So these were books recommended to me. Have you ever read them?
- Stefan Randig: [00:40:37](#) No, no.
- New Speaker: [00:40:38](#) Apparently, uh, they're excellent. They're books about flow, state of mind, and they're not just like hippie blah blah. They go into the neurochemistry and the neurobiology of what is the flow state of mind. What is performance of these kind of, the elite levels from a

neurochemical point of view, understanding the hormones and neuromodulators and the role in your body. So super interesting, just started. But, um, this chapter is transforming passion into scope.

Stefan Randig: [00:41:05](#) Okay.

Luca Malaguti: [00:41:05](#) So really interesting stuff. You know, you need to have a passion, you want to have a scope, and by scope of course, it's what we just talked about, meaning and purpose. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, right? Uh, I will translate it in from Italian [inaudible] "passion can be a rather, uh, egotistical experience. Being taken by passion, signifies being taken and there's sometimes not a lot of space for other people".

Stefan Randig: [00:41:43](#) Hmm.

Luca Malaguti: [00:41:43](#) How do you feel about that? Is that, is that, like, is that true or is that just very subjective to many people? People that be, and, and, and I'm talking about people that are not in the same situation as you, maybe free divers that are just starting off. Maybe they're in a long-term relationship and they want to have a family and all of a sudden they have this passion free diving competitions. But at the same time there's still quite a bit of guilt because they realize that, well, if I pursue my passion, it means compromising something, it means giving up something potentially a job somewhere else, which makes more money, uh, spending time with my family back home, uh, or even literally just not spending enough time with my, uh, the family, with my family and children.

Stefan Randig: [00:42:30](#) Yeah. I think it really depends on the situation and yeah, I think for me it's really special because I feel like competition and work and family, it kind of compliments each other. Yeah. I mean, there are times when I feel like, um, okay, instead of taking my daughter to the beach, now I'm going for pool training. So I feel like, okay, this is maybe is it really necessary? And, you know, isn't it a bit selfish, you know, to sacrifice family time for my personal development. But then I always think that, you know, okay, I'm doing this for myself. I'm doing this to improve my diving, but in the end I'm doing this also, um, for the family. You know, like I think it in, like we said, in some way it will come back to, um, secure work and, and, uh, support the family. So, and I think as long as there's a bit of of balance, um, you know, other families like, uh, parents work from nine to five and they see each other only in the evening. So.

New Speaker: [00:43:40](#) That's true. Absolutely true.

Stefan Randig: [00:43:41](#) I'm still really happy that I'm able to spend so much time with, with, uh, my daughter and my wife and...

Luca Malaguti: [00:43:49](#) That's a good point. People, people judging from the outside sometimes don't realize, well, if you're doing a nine to five, it actually means you're probably doing more of a seven to six. Yeah. Okay. How much time do you actually spend with your child that goes to school and then maybe you pick them up and maybe they have after school activities?

Stefan Randig: [00:44:07](#) Yeah, and I like with the training, like I'm trying now to again like, like, uh, connect family life with training. You know, it's my wife coaching me at the pool. I stretch together with my daughter. Um, and for me, this is really gives me a lot of pleasure also. Yeah. Um, that I don't have to disconnect those two so much.

Luca Malaguti: [00:44:34](#) That's, that's beautiful to hear. So it's really like you found a way that...

Stefan Randig: [00:44:38](#) I think it is possible.

Luca Malaguti: [00:44:39](#) Free diving and everything that it provides is really something that has encompassed your entire, your entire family and has included everybody. You include, you don't exclude.

Stefan Randig: [00:44:51](#) Yeah. I think, uh, it's, I've, I've seen this with colleagues and other athletes. Sometimes it's, it's sad to see if people have to sacrifice, um, so much just to be able to, to train and, um, sacrifice family time and... I think like we have this very nice situation where my wife understands free diving. She's always been around free divers and she's a scuba diver, so she understands what passion for the ocean means and, but because she is not an athlete herself, that also is very nice for me because I think that being together, like having your partner be an athlete, maybe I, I don't know, for myself, I would imagine it to be maybe sometimes a little difficult. Like coming home and, and, uh, talking about free diving <laugh>, you know?

Luca Malaguti: [00:45:51](#) Right. You need to come home and sometimes change subjects.

Stefan Randig: [00:45:54](#) Exactly.

Luca Malaguti: [00:45:54](#) That could actually be sometimes, uh, a point, a point of friction for some people to, to, to find different things to talk about because yes, even though your whole world is free diving, your whole life is surrounded by free diving, you still need to find other ways to stimulate each other intellectually and, um, and, and keep things fun on another level.

Stefan Randig: [00:46:21](#) Because I'm, I'm training and I'm going through all these things and, and dealing with, with, uh, all these challenges. And I, if, if I imagine that my partner would go through the same <laugh>, you know, um, I don't know. That would be pretty intense.

Luca Malaguti: [00:46:35](#) Yes. <laugh> you need to come home and maybe have other things that you have in common. What, what other things do you do? Like cooking? Uh, games, puzzles...Do you have stuff like that in your family?

Stefan Randig: [00:46:50](#) Um, like we spend a lot of time outside. Okay. Um, I mean the ocean is always a big part of it. Yeah. But, um, yeah. But just not really free diving, you know...

Luca Malaguti: [00:47:05](#) Just talk about something else. Something different. That's, that's, I think I've heard that from a few people and it's, it's, that's just pretty, it's pretty important for any other things you do. Yeah. Fantastic. Awesome. Um, yeah, that, that's the question I was gonna ask you really. When you, when you have loved, when you have loved ones and how do you perform at the highest levels without guilt and you kind of answered it, it it's really just you've, you found a way to pursue, pursue your passion with curiosity, with scope, scope of course, um, meaning and purpose. And you found a way to do it by encompassing your family and kind of embedded in the, in, in this fabric that is, is, is ultimately, you know, this point in common, which is a love for the ocean, whichever way that means. Which is could be competitive pushing performances. It could be your daughter just, no, I just wanna swim. I just want to connect with the ocean. Maybe that might lead to down a different path and she'll become a marine biologist or come up with a biodegradable plastic, you know, uh, and your, and your wife with, with scuba diving, which is, uh, in technical diving, which is a whole other, um, psychological thing on itself. Actually, I, I'm always fascinated to talk to technical divers mm-hmm. <affirmative> and how they, uh, stay calm in certain situations. Um, especially cave divers have a particularly interesting head on their shoulders.

Stefan Randig: [00:48:35](#) Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, I remember like when we met the first time, um, we got to know each other. So I just started freed Freediving back then and she was like very active as a tech diver and she had done a dive just past a hundred meters. And I said one day, <laugh> one day I go deeper than you. Oh yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:48:55](#) <laugh>, I 100 meter tech dive is a serious dive.

Stefan Randig: [00:48:58](#) Yeah, it is.

Luca Malaguti: [00:49:00](#) And how deep are you now? What's your deepest?

Stefan Randig: [00:49:03](#) I did 103, so 103.

Luca Malaguti: [00:49:05](#) Free immersion?

Stefan Randig: [00:49:05](#) That was constant weight.

Luca Malaguti: [00:49:07](#) Oh, with the monofin.

Stefan Randig: [00:49:08](#) But not official was in training. Okay. But that's basically what she did. So we're even.

Luca Malaguti: [00:49:13](#) We're even now. Nice. Nice. And the funny thing is most people don't understand that 103 meter dive on the, on a technical rebreather is much more dangerous than 103 meter dive on the monofin.

Stefan Randig: [00:49:28](#) Oh sure. For sure. Yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:49:28](#) It's, um, because in order to approach 103 meters self-propelled with a monofin, it it, I mean, you could put yourself in danger. You know, if tomorrow morning you say, my ego is gonna take over and I'm gonna do 120 meter dive on the monofin, you'll put yourself in trouble. Yeah. Unnecessarily. Yeah. Um, your risk reward matrix will go out the window. Um, but yeah, tech, a tech dive to a hundred meter plus has immense risks like unforgiving death.

Stefan Randig: [00:50:00](#) Because you rely on, on now not yourself anymore, but on equipment...

Luca Malaguti: [00:50:05](#) You're relying on equipment which can fail.

Stefan Randig: [00:50:07](#) That can always fail. Yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:50:08](#) So yeah, it's cool how your, your wife also takes these risks. Um, you know, and, and you can, I'm sure if tomorrow morning she wants to do a hundred meter tech dive, there will be a conversation in the kitchen.

Stefan Randig: [00:50:24](#) Oh yeah, for sure. No, I, I don't think that, uh, yeah, no, I don't think that she would ever go back to those, um, deep dives just because like you say, there is, it's a different type of risk. Yeah. Um, and it's, it's, um, I don't see it as a very calculated one, um, like in freediving. Yeah. So that would be something like I would probably not be very comfortable with.

Luca Malaguti: [00:50:53](#) Like, you would not be comfortable with her doing that.

Stefan Randig: [00:50:55](#) No, I don't think so. But I, I think she would probably feel the same way.

Luca Malaguti: [00:50:59](#) She would understand.

Stefan Randig: [00:51:00](#) Yeah. I think she, I should say like okay, this is not necessary. Um,

Luca Malaguti: [00:51:05](#) Not even for a big paycheck on a super project.

Stefan Randig: [00:51:09](#) Depends, <laugh> it depends.

Luca Malaguti: [00:51:10](#) There you go. That's the risk reward matrix right there. Big paychecks. Wow. They just discovered this ship at a hundred meters off the coast of Okinawa.

Stefan Randig: [00:51:21](#) No, I don't think I would be very comfortable with it, to be honest.

Luca Malaguti: [00:51:24](#) They called her for some reason they want her to go with a elite group of tech divers.

Stefan Randig: [00:51:31](#) I don't know.

Luca Malaguti: [00:51:32](#) A conversation at least to be had in the kitchen.

Stefan Randig: [00:51:35](#) For sure. For sure. A couple of conversations. A couple of conversations, <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [00:51:40](#) Yes. It's a big, uh, and that's what a lot of people don't understand that in free diving we have these micro conversations quite often with ourselves and our family and our loved ones, which is actually what makes the sport quite safe. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Cause you wouldn't go from a hundred to 120 meters in a second.

Stefan Randig: [00:51:58](#) Exactly.

Luca Malaguti: [00:52:02](#) Um, awesome. I mean, this is this, there's some really great topics and I, I really appreciate you you talking a lot about this. Cause I can honestly tell you that there's a lot of people out there, including myself, that have these questions, these whys. And you know, to dissociate yourself from these questions when you're in the water takes a lot of experience. Takes years and years of experience. And sometimes it's very hard because to leave those whys on land is not easy. Mm-hmm. You know, it's not easy. That's an experience and a mental trading on its own to not bring the whys and the guilts into the water with you and the questions. Um, you know, um, can I have this life and have a, a family? Can I have this life and have a a healthy relationship? Can I have this life and, and have income and provide for my family? So these are, these are definitely solid whys. And I think you, um, yeah, I think you, you've inspired a lot of people to, to at least...

Stefan Randig: [00:53:03](#) To have a family <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [00:53:04](#) Have to have a family. Yes. To have a family in this sport. Cause let's be honest, freed diving doesn't pay that much. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Right. Like, if we wanted to make money, we would go back to,

Stefan Randig: [00:53:13](#) I would do something else for sure.

New Speaker: [00:53:14](#) Big cities, you know, and, and, and hustle in different ways. Yeah. And we probably wouldn't have very happy lives <laugh>.

Stefan Randig: [00:53:21](#) Yeah. No, but that's exactly the thing. I've had this thought many times where I'd be like, uh, maybe let's just go back to Europe or Japan and just get, get a secure job, even if it doesn't pay that well. But just something very ordinary and just to have security, you know, and, and like a regular income and, and um, and then maybe go to free dive, whatever there's time for it. But, um, just to have like some financial stability. But then just like you say like, um, first of all, I, or we wouldn't be happy. Um, and that in the end would come back on the family, you know.

Luca Malaguti: [00:54:05](#) It would reflect onto your daughter.

Stefan Randig: [00:54:07](#) It would reflect on the, on the family. Sure. So I'd rather, you know, make not that much money, but spend time by the ocean and live a happy life, you know, <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [00:54:21](#) That's absolutely it. Yeah.

Stefan Randig: [00:54:23](#) Yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:54:24](#) And you're also giving your daughter a different kind of environment. Cause she's growing up with, uh, German and Japanese at home, obviously. She has the opportunity, or will have the opportunity to learn Arabic. She's got English for sure. Mm-hmm. That's three, four very useful languages.

Stefan Randig: [00:54:42](#) With all the languages. And it's really like, she, she was born in the Philippines and she started, she started school there and the first year and now the move back here to Dahab, we were a bit worried about it because it's a big change of environment. Huge. Um, but she's really happy here. And Dahab is such a nice place for a kid of her age, I think. And her school is amazing. Like all her classmates have parents that are divers mm-hmm. <affirmative> surfers. Um, so this is really nice. You know, she, I think this is a really nice environment for, at least for her age group now.

Luca Malaguti: [00:55:24](#) It's a different kind of life for her at that age. Yeah, absolutely. That's fantastic. I think it's so cool. They actually makes me very happy when I see like these little

blonde, blue-eyed rushing kids running around with the goats and they're barefoot. So you like, you're worried about them. You're like, are they gonna cut their feet? But then you also know they're developing like hobbit feet, <laugh>, you know, like strong. Yeah. Dahab feet, strong leather bottoms with solid arches and their feet, you know, they have good, they're gonna have good feet. They will not gonna have problems like all the, the kids in, in class that are always sitting down and arching their back and they're gonna develop other problems. You know, we own that. We developed, so these kids, they're, they're developing a form of resilience, which you don't see in, uh, sanitized and clean western environments, let's put it that way. Where everything is...

Stefan Randig: [00:56:21](#) Super sterile.

Luca Malaguti: [00:56:22](#) Super sterile. Thank you. I was looking for that word. Super sterile. Yeah. And there was a study on that where they took kids and they put them in these sterile environments and they checked up on their immune system and it was garbage. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Garbage, garbage, garbage, garbage. Yeah. And there's a study on this. It's like, no, for a child, let them, they need to go out and eat dirt and eat poop <laugh>. They might get sick, they might, uh, you might have to go to the hospital a couple times, but you're, you're giving them like the strength they need to, to be resilient body and mind. So that's very cool. Awesome. Does your daughter run around barefoot and, and play with the goats?

Stefan Randig: [00:56:59](#) Yeah, sometimes. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. She's outside and, yeah.

Luca Malaguti: [00:57:02](#) That's awesome. Um, I guess the last question I wanted to ask was just, you're going, you want to go for 80 meter no fins next year. What's, what's your plan? What can you, what advice can you disseminate to our readers about, uh, how you're gonna approach this? And, and, uh, maybe just a couple little tips...

Stefan Randig: [00:57:26](#) Yeah. Like that's the main goal for next year. It was actually my goal for this year already. 2022. Um, and I got close, like I said, like I, I had the line set to that depth, um, got very close, um, but wasn't really quite there yet mentally. And I want to give myself one more, um, training cycle or one more season to prepare. And then, um, I'm pretty confident to do it next year. Um, yeah. I think I would say best advice is to really take time and train and do training. I mean training and not trying to do dives, but really building up from the bottom up and like really putting in the work. Um, cause I think what we see, especially here in <inaudible> where we get a lot of, I would say like intermediate divers. Yes. Diverse, I would

say in depth range. Like 50 to 80 is like, I'd say like, um, main range here. I think the majority of divers are performing and trying and doing dives and going out for a session and doing like 2, 3, 4 dives is not really training, you know, and you are performing. And then, um, there is this very nice analogy where you would say, okay, like instead of building a pyramid, you're climbing up a ladder.

Luca Malaguti: [00:58:58](#)

Nice.

Stefan Randig: [00:58:58](#)

Yeah. So you climb up, you keep climbing. Yeah. And then something doesn't work, you fall back down and need to climb back up again. And this is, there's no foundation, um, there's no foundation. And so I, I wanna take my time, um, starting from, from March, take like four or five months to really build up, create a solid foundation in the pool, strength, dry training, breath hold technique. Um, and then, yeah, just take time and peek in probably like June, July in the summer and do that dive <laugh>. That's the plan.

Luca Malaguti: [00:59:39](#)

That's incredible advice for everybody here and especially for me to hear as well.

Stefan Randig: [00:59:45](#)

I mean, I know, I know it's not easy. Um, because it is very time consuming and not everyone um, has that opportunity. But I mean, even if you have just limited time available to, to actually do the depth, there is so much you can do just to prepare yourself even being landlocked somewhere, you know? Um, so yeah, training smart and, and just creating a strong base I think is very important, especially for such a technical discipline, like no offenses. Yeah. Um, no,

Luca Malaguti: [01:00:22](#)

I like that analogy. Building a pyramid instead of climbing a ladder. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, it's, it's, it's not just where you want to get to, but how you're gonna get there.

Stefan Randig: [01:00:29](#)

Yeah. And what happens if, and what happens if you have to take a step back, you know, but you will.

Luca Malaguti: [01:00:33](#)

Everybody does. Yeah. Yeah. You will. Do you fall down back on your ass or do you fall a few blocks down, but you landed on some blocks, which you know you can keep going. Yeah. That's fantastic. And each block is quite versatile. You've got your strengthening, you wanna stay strong, you've got your breath hold, you've got your technique in the pool, your pool training, your deep hangs. So there's the blocks are, are very, the blocks that build your pyramid are very different. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>

Stefan Randig: [01:01:05](#)

I had this situation this year where I, I did exactly that, like really working up a pyramid, uh, from early in the year working towards, uh, vertical blue in no fins. And, um, then

after vertical blue, I took a few months off, um, not doing any or very little training. And then I thought, okay, let's just do like a, a run of, of deep dives, you know, without any, any complimentary training. Just do deep dives, just progress up the ladder, you know, and see how it goes. And I mean, it kind of worked. I got deep, but it's just a very different mindset coming to the rope. Uh, when you come to the rope with that strong foundation, I feel much more confident going for the dive. Because I, I have in my mind, I, I, there's much more trust in myself because of all the work I put in versus um, okay, yesterday I did 90, let's try 93, you know? Um, so there's much more uncertainty. Um, that's at least how I feel for myself. So I think like, putting in work and, and structured training, it's a big mental support as well. Um, cuz it gives confidence.

- Luca Malaguti: [01:02:24](#) That's huge. I really like that trust in myself because I know I've put in the work mm-hmm. <affirmative> and you can, with, with your mind mentally, you can go back and review the videotapes of the work that you've put in life.
- Stefan Randig: [01:02:39](#) Like for me, it's almost like a mantra. Like whenever I feel, when I'm preparing for the, um, for a dive and I have doubts in my head. Yeah. I just tell myself like, the work is done. You've put in a lot of work and smile, enjoy, and just do it. You know, like, um, you know, the foundation is there.
- Luca Malaguti: [01:03:01](#) I I, I've, I've noticed that as well too. Absolutely. When I say, when I've announced the dive time, that's maybe a little longer, I'm like, oh, that's a long dive time. Oh no, God is this blackout territory. And then I go back into the videotape of my memory and be like, dude, you did that hang and you did it many times and it was that much dive time. Yeah. Relax, you can be underwater for that much time.
- Stefan Randig: [01:03:26](#) And trust in yourself.
- Luca Malaguti: [01:03:26](#) Just that trust, just that, that sentence in my mind, you can be underwater for that much time. And regardless of the discipline, it gives me that confidence. Very interesting. I like that. Super, super good advice. Absolutely. Stefan, thank you so much. This has been amazing. Um, just as a little, uh, outro, this has been a really interesting interview and I'm really happy and thank you for taking the time.
- Stefan Randig: [01:03:55](#) Thank you.
- Luca Malaguti: [01:03:55](#) These are questions I've been wanting to ask someone like you because although I have a lot of, um, freedivers that I look up to and admire, a lot of them don't have the same balance in life that you do.

Stefan Randig: [01:04:09](#) Everyone is different now.

Luca Malaguti: [01:04:11](#) So it's nice to hear fresh words. Mm-hmm.

Stefan Randig: [01:04:15](#) Let's talk again when you have a kid, <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [01:04:17](#) Absolutely. Interview part two, Luca has a child! And I'll be like, ah, Stefan WTF?!

Stefan Randig: [01:04:25](#) You said it would be all okay.

Luca Malaguti: [01:04:27](#) I'm freaking out. Am hyperventilating like a, <laugh>? No, no. But this has been amazing, honestly. Just talk about competitions, family life balance, uh, you know, breaking down stereotypes of being guilty and selfish as an athlete, but actually finding that balance and, and being able to include, I really like that word, the inclusion of your family in what you do and not the exclusion. Yeah. Not like, no, this is me stiff on time. Like, no, this is our time and we support each other. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> and I come home and I'm a better man. I'm a better husband. I'm a better father for it. Yeah. I really like that. Yeah. And um, yeah man, thank you so much.

Luca Malaguti: [01:05:08](#) You're welcome.