

# SEX, SELF LOVE & FREEDIVING WITH GUS KREIVENAS

Gus Kreivenas: [00:11](#)

Welcome, welcome, welcome to the Alchemy podcast. I'm your host, Luca Malaguti and today we've got a really special guest Gus Kreivenas. Gus is a Lithuanian national record holder, champion freediver, an internationally renowned coach, and arguably one of the most knowledgeable people around, when it comes to freediving education, knowledge and training. Gus is based out of Dahab, Egypt, where he runs his school Touchdown and Touchdown Space, one of the most welcoming environments for anybody that's looking for long term training. I spent a lot of time there. I feel like it's my second home. And I highly recommend anybody go visit Dahab specifically, but also his training camps and what he offers there. Gus is a really good friend of mine and mind, and since we've met, we've always had these really out worldly conversations ranging from many topics and just going on tangents and he's somebody whose mind is very, very interesting. And so today we will be talking about something most people don't really want or are able to discuss in freediving and athletics. In general, we decided to just talk about self love, taking care of yourself, sex love in athletics and freediving. Again, these

are topics that are not easily discussed depending on the culture and religion and nation you come from, they might be taboo, but they're very important because they affect your emotions, your psychology, your very biochemistry is dependent on these things. And so today I'd like you to welcome Mr. Gus Kreivenas on the Alchemy podcast as we will discuss sex, self-love taking care of yourself in athletics, competitive freediving and how this affects your performance.

Luca Malaguti: [02:44](#)

I'm here with none other than Gus Kreivenas, and we are gonna talk about self-love sex and freediving as we drink these amazing Heinekens on a beautiful evening in Dahab. Um, and yeah, you know, it's, it's gotta be different, it's gotta be like, it's gotta flow. And this is what it's already done. Like we started flowing before we even introduced the topic. Now why self-love sex and freediving? Remember the conversation when we started?

Gus Kreivenas: [03:12](#)

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Luca Malaguti: [03:13](#)

And I have tons of research about us going into this. Look at all these articles, sex before athletics.

Gus Kreivenas: [03:21](#)

Yeah...

Luca Malaguti: [03:22](#)

That was interesting. Cause you told me when you were at the peak of your athletic performance and you were dating one of the most beautiful Russian women I've ever seen...

Gus Kreivenas: [03:30](#)

<Laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [03:31](#)

And you know, like you're there balancing so many things. I gotta be a good coach. I gotta

be a good role model. I'll give you a good athlete. I gotta be a good man. A good lover. And that that's where self love, sex and athleticism comes into play. First of all, let's look back, the greatest fighters of all time, all the boxers Mohamed Ali, Mike Tyson would say, "man, no, you gotta abstain from sex couple of weeks if you wanna have a good fight". Let's be honest. You gotta build up that aggressiveness. You gotta build, but freediving is different. And we know that doesn't apply anymore. It's not the same. And it's a different sport. And it's also different for men and women, but

Gus Kreivenas: [04:11](#) It's not, I don't know, like for me, I always had this position of that it's a very different sport.

Luca Malaguti: [04:19](#) Like biochemically, neurologically...

Gus Kreivenas: [04:26](#) To me it seemed like it's completely the opposite of what you would try to do in any other sport.

Luca Malaguti: [04:32](#) 100%.

Gus Kreivenas: [04:33](#) But then the more I speak with athletes from different sports, you know, because I get people coming from running, tri athletes and musicians and boxers and, uh, MMA fighters and so on and so on and so on, and a no skiers, uh, I'm like you name it. But when you start to speak with them really into depth and if the guy is smart and if the guy really achieved something in that sport, you know...

Luca Malaguti: [05:05](#) Exactly.

Gus Kreivenas: [05:05](#) This is the key point, you know, because you get a lot of wanna bees and failures and so on. And then the main reason why they didn't

get what they want to get, they didn't understood it. They didn't get it.

Luca Malaguti: [05:17](#)

Right.

Gus Kreivenas: [05:18](#)

They didn't find this balance. They didn't understand how you have to actually try to get there without trying to get there.

Luca Malaguti: [05:29](#)

You got to get there without trying to get there.

Gus Kreivenas: [05:31](#)

How you have to learn to be very effective about your resources. You know, you have to learn how to spend less and get more.

Luca Malaguti: [05:44](#)

Time, money, health,

Gus Kreivenas: [05:46](#)

Anything.

Luca Malaguti: [05:46](#)

That's what I think about when you say that, anything, the balance between...

Gus Kreivenas: [05:49](#)

Exactly. And, like, if people dig it, they get their goals, they understand, they learn it.

Luca Malaguti: [05:58](#)

Yeah.

Gus Kreivenas: [05:58](#)

Because it's about learning. Yes. It's about learning. It's about analyzing, it's about finding the weak spots. It's about finding the strengths, you know, and using the strengths and building on weaknesses, you know, and, uh, and reaching the targets. I really like this idea about doing - doing, not doing, you know, concept, you know, and I, and I feel like it's in any sport. You know.

Luca Malaguti: [06:29](#)

That's where the self love comes into play.

Gus Kreivenas: [06:31](#)

Exactly.

Luca Malaguti: [06:31](#) Because if you don't have any self love, no way, you won't be ready to absorb information and actually learn properly.

Gus Kreivenas: [06:37](#) Exactly.

Luca Malaguti: [06:37](#) You don't respect yourself. You don't have dignity, integrity.

Gus Kreivenas: [06:40](#) I like how you picked it up, you know, you really think it <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [06:43](#) Yeah.

Gus Kreivenas: [06:44](#) It's really hard because some people like "do without doing, you know, what do you mean"?

Luca Malaguti: [06:47](#) You know, no, it's not masturbating all self love...

Gus Kreivenas: [06:51](#) I mean, doing without doing, like, for instance, how you do without doing in sports? It is like, um, you need to take a step back and focus on the skills, to be able to push, without f\*\*\*\*\* yourself up.

Luca Malaguti: [07:12](#) Exactly.

Gus Kreivenas: [07:13](#) If that makes sense.

Luca Malaguti: [07:14](#) Like we were talking last time about acknowledging the role of the central nervous system and that you can really f\*\*\* it up. You can push too much until it collapses.

Gus Kreivenas: [07:23](#) Exactly. And a lot of people like that, I meet, athletes that come from different backgrounds and so on and athletes that are already in this, in this game for a long period of time, the main thing that we have to always talk about is rest.

Luca Malaguti: [07:44](#) Yes.

Gus Kreivenas: [07:45](#) Because everyone is just doing what?

Luca Malaguti: [07:48](#) Chastising! Chastising each other...

Gus Kreivenas: [07:50](#) And they think they don't work hard enough and they have to push more and they have to create enough stimuli in order to... And in many cases, they way out is stepping back, resting more.

Luca Malaguti: [08:05](#) Yes.

Gus Kreivenas: [08:05](#) Working on the skills, you know, like doing something that seems like it's not f\*\*\*\*\* really related to what you really need to do. And in this way, just like filling the gaps, filling the gaps, filling the gaps, filling the gaps. And then when you come, you start to try to apply you just dive into it. And there's a smooth, insane process. Amazing progress. Everybody's happy. Oh, by the way, congratulate us, we just had the guy diving to 90 meters. He progressed from 65 to 90 <laugh> in Free Immersion. It's insane.

Luca Malaguti: [08:42](#) It's insane.

Gus Kreivenas: [08:43](#) Of course, the guy was a vice champion in 2016 or something... So functional abilities, you know, of course there, so he came, he was like, oh, I have an issue, equalization, da, da. <laugh> He was like "can you help me"? Like, "I would like to dive a little bit deeper"... Two visits, two f\*\*\*\*\* visits.

Luca Malaguti: [09:15](#) Two visits over a long period of time though.

Gus Kreivenas: [09:18](#) Yes, of course.

Luca Malaguti: [09:20](#) Multi week, multi month.

Gus Kreivenas: [09:22](#) Yeah, he did two one month visits,

Luca Malaguti: [09:26](#) 90 meters...

Gus Kreivenas: [09:26](#) During the first visit we went variable just to give him confidence and so on. And we work on equalization because he could, and it was cold and we didn't have much time and so on. Uh, but then I said, okay, then you came back and we start to do it, you know, constant weight. And then he came back and then the first week he was working with his students, the second week he was helping me to work with my students. And I would, uh, let him to do an occasional dive and then the, the final step, like couple weeks of his personal training

Luca Malaguti: [10:07](#) Crushed, it just went for it. Mind was ready.

Gus Kreivenas: [10:09](#) I was like, no f\*\*\*\*\* way. And it just kept coming up. And like, there, there was one wiggle, where he turned, and he was like, and even he didn't actually turn, like, because I put so much more that he turned, but he was still doing a PB.

Luca Malaguti: [10:27](#) oh God.

Gus Kreivenas: [10:31](#) He turned and he came back and he was like, all miserable. I was like, you know, I done like, what the f\*\*\* you know? And then he looked at his watch and he was like "f\*\*\*"!

Luca Malaguti: [10:40](#) He was ready for it.

Gus Kreivenas: [10:43](#) You know, so, but anyway, so it it's a big one. Uh, it's a, it's an amazing example of what means if you give someone that has a good attitude, good work ethics.

Luca Malaguti: [11:04](#) Yeah.

- Gus Kreivenas: [11:05](#) You know, like understanding of how to work on your skills, how to go step by step and amazing approach, you know, and just like step by step, bam, bam, bam. He puts all the details. He mastered this, he mastered that, he mastered this. And we put everything together.
- Luca Malaguti: [11:26](#) I really believe that because, um, one concept that I'm just gently starting to tap into, by no means an expert, is the concept of, you know, forget your goals and dreams for a second and work on your systems and your principles. This is something by Tim Ferris, the four hour work week, forget goals and dreams. They're too romanticized, Hollywood movie. You wanna get somewhere, you need to build habits. You need to build systems, you need to build principles. And that requires you to have a massive amount of self love for yourself to show up every day to put in the work, to build those systems.
- Gus Kreivenas: [12:05](#) Yes, yes. Of course.
- Luca Malaguti: [12:07](#) I show up every day, I put in the work every day, these are my principles. These are my systems. Is that something you resonate with?
- Gus Kreivenas: [12:16](#) Yes, exactly. Yeah. A lot. But at the same time I have this thing where I can be too harsh with myself.
- Luca Malaguti: [12:25](#) Oh, of course.
- Gus Kreivenas: [12:25](#) And I can drive myself up to like I drain my batteries completely flat out. So what I've learned is, you know, to express self love by sometimes being like "okay, today, all I can do is this, you know, and it's fine".

Luca Malaguti: [12:43](#) And it's fine.

Gus Kreivenas: [12:44](#) And it's completely fine. And then of course, like, I'll go like, "oh f\*\*\* man, again, you didn't do this, you didn't do that". I've done more. Um, but what I mostly like about, what is happening now that I never give up.

Luca Malaguti: [13:06](#) Yeah.

Gus Kreivenas: [13:06](#) You know, you show up. You show up, so you never give up. And it doesn't matter what, okay. Like, okay, now's this period. Maybe it's month, maybe it's one year, you know? And you can do only this. You know, but you keep moving, you keep thinking and not actually, uh, you know, overriding yourself. Not pushing yourself so badly that you know, you cannot tell from pudding anymore.

Luca Malaguti: [13:31](#) I'm in pain, but I'm doing it.

Gus Kreivenas: [13:34](#) Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sometimes I'm like, uh, I go like, okay, you know, "I cannot do this anymore. I need to take a break" and I will take a break.

Luca Malaguti: [13:43](#) Cause you've had burnouts. I've had burnouts.

Gus Kreivenas: [13:45](#) Yeah. I had a couple of big burnouts.

Luca Malaguti: [13:47](#) Burnouts are ugly. Not just physically, but psychologically. I've had burnouts where on land my brain just shut down and I black out for 10 minutes.

Gus Kreivenas: [13:56](#) Oh s\*\*t...

Luca Malaguti: [13:57](#) Cerebral ischemia caused by a sink and drop of blood pressure, triggered by some little mechanisms.

Gus Kreivenas: [14:05](#) <laugh>.

Luca Malaguti: [14:09](#) But, very interesting how the mind can be pushed to that point and a reminder of, "hey, self love, self love". Like, come on, you know, like what are you doing? What are you doing? Come on, get back to it.

Gus Kreivenas: [14:22](#) Back to sex

Luca Malaguti: [14:24](#) <laugh> I like it. I like it. Self love, sex and freediving with Gus. One thing that we started talking about, and again, back to athleticism, we're talking about athleticism at a high performance. I started doing some research and I found, and I looked into Rhonda Rousey, one of the best MMA female fighters was all the time, a stunning, beautiful woman with a strong leadership and message of empowerment to other women as well, which I really, really like. And she would upfront without b\*\*\*\*\*t tell people, look, I...

Gus Kreivenas: [14:58](#) The name?

Luca Malaguti: [15:00](#) Uh, Rhonda Rousey. She's an MMA fighter, very famous world champion. And she publicly said, "yes, I've done my research. I know what I'm doing. And I really, really enjoy having sex before performances, because it boosts my testosterone. It boosts my aggression. It makes me a better fighter".

Gus Kreivenas: [15:21](#) Okay.

Luca Malaguti: [15:21](#) So that I found it very, very interesting. I found it very interesting. And then I looked into other studies about how athletes used to abstain from having sex in order to have better performances and counter research saying that's actually all BS, you know, because it's not been proven.

Gus Kreivenas: [15:39](#) I can tell you this now. It really depends.

Luca Malaguti: [15:45](#) Exactly, of course.

Gus Kreivenas: [15:46](#) It really depends. Now the more I see it, like really people come and go like, "but what is good, but what is right or wrong"? You know, "what should I do to increase my performance"? You know? And like, "is that right? Is that, is that what I should do"? You know? And I'm like, well it depends. It depends. And how you find out? Experience, by trying, you know, and when students come to me, I go like, "guys, my job is to bring clarity and it's gonna come through discussion and it' come through trial and error and it's gonna come through applying things and checking how it goes, how it works out in the long term with you" not with, uh, Alexey not with... Because I know that, uh, some stuff is really important to understand as a foundation, you know, but it's not for everybody. And I meet people that explode my brain and they, you know, that you can program your brain and it could be as weird as, like before the dive you have to, I don't know, scratch your bum, you know, and that's gonna make a good dive, right?

Luca Malaguti: [17:02](#) Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Gus Kreivenas: [17:03](#) You don't do it.

Luca Malaguti: [17:04](#) You don't scratch your bum.

Gus Kreivenas: [17:05](#) And he goes like, "should I scratch my bum before the dive"? Whatever rocks your man! You know? And he scratches his bum!

Luca Malaguti: [17:12](#) Should I dive with a butt plug in or something?

- Gus Kreivenas: [17:15](#) Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's a f\*\*\*\*\* joke, but the point is like, "should I have sex before or not"? Whatever f\*\*\*\*\* rocks your boat... If you feel like you had sex and you come in the morning and you feel uplifted and you feel like "really"? And then it depends on what kind of sex, you know, how do you have sex? You know, what is sex for you? Like, are you having like, hardcore anal? <laugh> You're making love three hours? Like your body is like lactic as s\*\*\*\* you know, you are like half paralyzed, almost having a stroke...
- Luca Malaguti: [17:52](#) <laugh>
- Gus Kreivenas: [17:53](#) Or are you just like, uh, having a sweet, loving... So this is the point, this is where I feel like people fail to understand that we always interpret, we get something told to us and then we interpret. We go like, ah, so, so like I do this and this is, this is how we do it, but not how that person probably do it. And if you speak with the person, you're gonna realize that there's some buts and ifs, buts <laugh>.
- Luca Malaguti: [18:28](#) But it makes sense. Think about it. Right. We have idols, we look up to idols, Muhammad Ali, Tyson, let's say.
- Gus Kreivenas: [18:35](#) Alexey...
- Luca Malaguti: [18:35](#) Alexey, whatever he does, I don't know. And we look up to our idols and no matter what they do and we gotta copy it. And, oh, if Muhammad Ali would say, "I don't have sex for six weeks", I shouldn't have sex for six weeks before a big comp competition, you know? And then Rhonda Rousey under hand says, "no, no, no, no, I do have sex before my, uh, my performance because it enhances

blah, blah, blah, blah. So we tend to gravitate towards the extremities.

Gus Kreivenas: [18:59](#) Yeah. I can tell you, like, for instance, I've had conversations with high level athletes, you know?

Luca Malaguti: [19:09](#) Yes.

Gus Kreivenas: [19:09](#) And, uh, women, and some of them, they get better performances and some of them, they get worse performances and they cannot really, and I'm sure that it really depends on what you do.

Luca Malaguti: [19:25](#) Who and who with.

Gus Kreivenas: [19:26](#) Exactly. Maybe how mentally it charges you, are you surrounded or draining you?

Luca Malaguti: [19:33](#) Yes, exactly.

Gus Kreivenas: [19:34](#) You know, like, does the person just f\*\*\*\* the life out of you or the person gives you energy?

Luca Malaguti: [19:40](#) Absolutely.

Gus Kreivenas: [19:41](#) And shares and fills you up...

Luca Malaguti: [19:46](#) We've just had, we just had one beer.  
<laugh> I really believe I'm one, I'm one that really believes that sex without love is just about power. It's just about evolutionary, you know, different power plays. And, um, but when there is love, when there is support, then maybe that's a really, really good mental state for the athlete. You know what I mean? It's a very supportive state while at the same time, making sure that yeah, the person isn't completely drained of their energy, you know? Um, so it was known in the Olympics. I dunno if you remember the real Olympics, they

handed out over 400,000 condoms. <laugh>  
right. So they were essentially, they did this  
for, uh, STIs and making sure people didn't  
have sexually transmitted diseases. Right.  
But, uh, they essentially promoted athletes to  
have sex before the performance. We're  
talking about the Olympics here, you know...