

Team Toyota Diver David Boudia Finds Value in the Journey—Not the Destination

July 24, 2020



To fans across the world, it may seem that Olympic and Paralympic athletes have it all. Competing on the world’s stage, representing their home countries, and for some, standing at the top of the podium as their national anthem plays. But as Team Toyota athlete David Boudia can attest, the pressures that come along with spending your entire life training for a single moment aren’t always visible to the outside world.

Three-time Olympian and four-time medalist, Boudia shares that post-Olympics blues are a real thing. After not performing to his expectations at the Olympic Games Beijing 2008, Boudia fell into a deep depression that put him on an emotional rollercoaster of extreme highs and terrifying lows—so low that thoughts of suicide crossed Boudia’s mind.

Despite the possibility of social stigma, Boudia chose to talk about his emotional journey in hopes of promoting mental health awareness in the new original content series from Olympic Channel, [“What Moves Me Presented by Toyota.”](#) Each episode in the six-part series features a global Team Toyota athlete relating experiences in building resilience during times of adversity. For Boudia, the best decisions in his life came from becoming vulnerable and building up the strength to ask for help when he needed it the most.

After having the courage to tell his story in his 2016 autobiography, “Greater Than Gold,” Boudia’s episode in the series “What Moves Me” is his latest step of courage in sharing about the common struggles that elite athletes face. As Boudia shares, “When you watch the Olympic Games, I’ll tell you, every single one of those athletes has a story. They have a history. They have a past that’s good and bad that has gotten them to that point where they’re competing at the Olympic Games. I think what makes all of our journeys so special is the fact that the past has happened, but it doesn’t have to define your future.”

Boudia hopes that by sharing his story about recovery from depression, he can inspire others to live life to the fullest and find joy in the journey regardless of what’s happened in the past or what might happen in the future. Boudia says, “You put yourself in a vulnerable situation where athletes want to appear to be strong and have it all together. When you say you have some sort of mental health issue, it might feel weak or you might feel vulnerable, but I think in that situation in particular, that’s where you grow the most. I think what I want most out of my athletic career is to affect people in a positive way beyond what they see of me on television.”



Although an extended road to the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 now lies ahead, Boudia continues to remind himself to enjoy the small things. In this case, he's cherishing what the postponement has afforded him. "I look at what the past four months have brought and the memories I've created with my family. I've been able to spend more time with them than I would have done had I been competing at the Olympic Games and kept to the schedule," says Boudia.

For his sport specifically, Boudia adds, "I do recognize there are a lot of athletes out there who have had a huge burden put on them, and I'm empathetic to that. I think if we all step back and look at what the past four months have done, we'll see that we've grown a lot mentally."

Now, Boudia has even more time to build up his mental fortitude and strengthen his support system on his quest for gold next summer.