

Speaker 1 ([00:00:12](#)):

You are listening to the Journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick is a horseman trainer, international clinician, and author who helps empower horse people from all over the world with the skills, knowledge, and mindsets needed to create trusting partnerships with their horses. Warwick offers a free seven day trial to his comprehensive online video library that includes hundreds of full length training videos and several home study courses@videos.warwickschiller.com.

Warwick Schiller ([00:00:45](#)):

Good day everyone. Welcome back to The Journey on podcast. I'm your host Warwick Schiller, and my amazing guest this week on the podcast is John St. Ryan. And this guy has got a bio to blow your minds. Listen to this, John St. Ryan was born in the uk, taught martial arts for 27 years throughout Europe, coaching 12 individuals to become national champions, and being elected as chairman of the British Tie Boxing Council. Around that time, he rode horses for fun and somehow managed to fit in an acting career, which included being stunt double for Sean Connery and co-starring with Heath Ledger in the TV series Roar. His screenwriting credits include the Assassinator and Target Eve Ireland. John immigrated to the U S A in 1992 and he was introduced to the Amazing Horseman, Tom Dorrance and became an avid student and friend to Tom. Together they created Tom's first training, D V D Greetings from Tom Dorrance, which was a great success and led to several other training. DVDs included field timing and balance and visits with Tom Johnson. Ryan competed in the Spanish riding discipline of DOMA Kerra and won the US National Championships three years in a row, 2004 to 2006. So how about that for quite the bio, and that's about all I need to tell you about this guy and we'll get on with the conversation with Johnson Ryan,

([00:02:16](#)):

John St. Ryan. Welcome to the Journey on podcast.

John Saint Ryan ([00:02:18](#)):

Thank you, Warwick.

Warwick Schiller ([00:02:20](#)):

This is going to be fun. In the intro, I read out your bio and you one of those guys you like the Renaissance man got to the highest levels of things that are all totally on the surface, totally unrelated, so this is going to be a Yeah, that's true. A fun conversation. The first part of your bio is about being a martial arts coach for 27 years throughout Europe, including coaching 12 individuals become national champions and being elected the chairman of the British Tire Boxing Council. What martial art were you Coaching?

([00:02:59](#)):

Well, I started off in karate, actually kung fu a long time ago when I was about 14. And then I went to karate, did a style called Waterloo, and then I did shelter can. I got up to first down in that, and then I opened my own school four or five years later or something like that. And while I was teaching, I wanted to continue learning. It's just the same as anything in any pursuit. You don't just stop learning just because you achieve a certain level. And I got the opportunity to train with a T master who'd just come over. I was living in England at the time near Manchester, and this Thai and gentleman had come over with his friend and they taught Muay Thai, and I didn't know anything about Muay Hai at the time, so I was recommended to go and see them.

([00:03:51](#)):

So I went to see them and I was very impressed with the whole system, the whole style of the art itself. So I asked for private lessons just to get a foot in the door kind of thing. And it did open my eyes to a lot of different things that were, I wasn't happy with a traditional art to a certain degree. And so I switched over and it was very odd because by the time I'd got to switching over, I'd achieved third degree because I don't know, it was 12 years later. And so to change and just take everything off was a big step. And a lot of the students that I had and the assistant coaches and such, I just said to them, look, this is my path that I'm traveling and you can follow it if you want, but it's up to you and I understand some of you are at your first queue or your next step would be to the first degree black belt, and I wouldn't want to stop you from pursuing that achievement.

[\(00:04:54\)](#):

So some stayed and I gave them the club literally, and then continued on my own path and did it for several years. And it was a very small nucleus of people. And the two time masters master scan and Master Woody, actually Master Toddie, master Woody came in later. They were teaching and the school got bigger, but it was still, you're only talking about 30 people, 40 people, 50 people as it grew. But then we got to over a hundred people and then I opened my gym if you made it strictly Muay Hai. So then we had maybe 20 to add on to that. We still weren't very big, but as we got bigger, then I approached the British, well, the Martial Arts Commission in England, which is the governing body for all martial arts. And I submitted requests over a period of time to get Muay Hai accepted within the Martial Arts Commission in England. And we got that done. And that was a step because then it was recognized as an official martial art within the United Kingdom. And then we just grew from that. And now there's thousands of people. It's marvelous, wonderful. And it led me quite certainly throughout Europe. We took fighters to Europe and fighters in Holland were the best fighters in Muay Hai. They were tough, they've been doing it longer and from the Thai people and their skills were ahead of ours. So we really had a hard time with the Dutch fighters. They were excellent.

[\(00:06:34\)](#):

So from the beginning, what led you to martial arts in the first place?

John Saint Ryan [\(00:06:42\)](#):

I was six foot four as a kid, string bean. And from the time I went to what you might call, I dunno, secondary school, when you turned 11 years old, we moved to Ireland and it was at the time of the troubles in the seventies. And

Warwick Schiller [\(00:07:00\)](#):

Were you in Northern Ireland? In Northern Ireland?

[\(00:07:02\)](#):

Yeah, I went to Northern Ireland. Yeah, so we were just outside of Belfast. Oh, wow. And being a kid, and I came from England and mom and dad were English. It was a bit awkward at first because there was a lot of mistrust about British people anyway. And then we had all the mucking about with the Catholic and the Protestant deal and all that and the turmoil there. So as a child, I'm just calling myself a child, 10, 11 years old. It was really confusing for me. And I be getting in fights. I didn't want to get into fights just like at school. And then when you're a big guy, people want to knock you down. That elevates them, the bigger the height of you fall. And I just thought, yeah, I really need to mediate through this. So I would try and talk people out there, let's not fight about this. It's stupid. And I gained a lot of good friends on both sides of the aisle, if you will. Both sides of the, I'm going to say Republicans and Democrats there. Yeah, this

[\(00:08:02\)](#):

Country, it's the troubles in this country, not Northern Ireland Lord,

John Saint Ryan [\(00:08:07\)](#):

But so similar work. That's the thing. It's just like people are, why are we fighting? We're all human beings for goodness sake. And with a Catholic and Protestant deal, I understood it's historically relevant, but the groundswell has to come from the people and say, we've got to stop doing this. It's just bad for everybody. I got involved with a little bit of martial arts, but then when I was 14, I just had enough of getting into scraps. And also, you know what scraps I like in school, it's rough and you're grabbing people and you're trying to punch 'em and they're doing all kinds of stuff. There's no skill to it. It's just like, how tough can you stand?

[\(00:08:53\)](#):

I thought, I'm going to go to this kung fu deal. So I went to this fellow who'd ostensibly trained in China, and he formed his own thing called White Cloud Kung Fu. Nice guy Derek Gordon only. He wasn't a very tall guy, but he had a lot of big guys who were his assistants, if you will. And we'd just do, it was so traditional, it was very, very formal. You'd all stand in a line. It was at the Y M C A and you'd stand in line and you'd just stand there and you'd punch and you'd stand in horse stance where your legs are really wide apart and you'd squat. And then the guys would come around and they'd just kick your legs and you think, okay, right. And then they come around and they kind punch you in the stomach. They say, 10 insult punch you in the stomach.

[\(00:09:40\)](#):

So this is go on and you think, oh, it's good for the character maybe, but it's killing me. I'm bruised to death. And you go home and you try and get out of bed in the morning, you'd be limping your dad and say, what the heck have you been doing that? I was at kung fu last night, dad. So that wasn't really very good. And then I found a teacher who did Waterloo, he was better. And then I finally found this teacher who did shelter karate. Again, this is a Japanese system, and he was excellent. And we've remained all these years, we've remained good friends. He's in his eighties now and he taught me the most. And then he not only taught me the physical things, but he started to teach me more about discipline, the respect and the formalities of it all and how it should be affecting your life.

[\(00:10:32\)](#):

So we're not talking about any circus stuff, like some of the fighting things that you see on M M A and so on and so forth. It's just like everything. You've got people who are dedicated martial artists who have that real deep desire to do things correctly and have that integrity, to have the respect for one another. And that's the mainstay of true martial art. And then it just went on from there. So the bottom line was I ab where bullies in any respect, in any shape or form. And that's why I'm very conscious about other animals who can't speak for themselves. It was like with dogs, all dogs are not a dog trainer, but had a connection with animals like that. And then with horses it was the same. There was something else, but obviously I'll get onto the thing that drew me that way. But with the martial arts, it was more about how you develop yourself as a good human being, irrespective of your belief systems or whatever. You should be able to accept all people and continue on and be good, be as good as you can be. But if the crap hits the fan, then you can deal with it unless there's a gun involved.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:12:00\)](#):

Right. We'll get to that later. At clinics. I will talk to people about, I say by this point in time that this horse thing's a discipline. I say people get into martial arts maybe because they don't want to get beat

up initially, but if they stay in it long enough, it becomes a discipline. It's kind of a way of looking at the world and things like that. And by the time people get to my clinics, at least I'm not the first porter called, sometimes I'm the last port of call sort of thing. So I kind of say to people by this point in time, it's not about the damn horse won't do the thing. It's about a discipline. It's a way of looking at the world and it's a way of viewing things with empathy and things like that. And for you, when do you think, because that's a level of maturity too, when do you think the martial arts went from, I don't want to get into scraps at school to, this is more about me and the way I show up and the world, more so than about the fighting part of it itself.

[\(00:13:10\)](#):

When do you think that kind of happened?

John Saint Ryan [\(00:13:11\)](#):

Probably about when I just got to my brown belt level. It'd probably be about 18, something like that. And then you're obviously, you're working on the physical aspects and your prowess in the ring, well on the mat then. And you're trying to develop your physical skills and your timing and your ability to read an opponent. But therein lies that next step, which is to see other things around you and be more aware of things around you. And then you start to develop this overall awareness about your environment and then the people wherever you are. I did decide that it would be a good idea at one point to work on the doors and the nightclub because that way you get to practice your skills.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:14:17\)](#):

So bounce about

John Saint Ryan [\(00:14:18\)](#):

Fairly because if they're starting the thing, then you're there to diffuse the situation. But having the skills while you find out whether you do have the skills or not in a situation like that, because a lot of the times you're not just dealing with one person. It is not a one-to-one thing, like a competition. You've got the guy and his two mates, and maybe he's got four guys around there. So you better hope that your mates in the door, on the door will be watching out for you as well. Part of the deal, being aware of everything around you. We had little, oh, mnemonic, what was it?

[\(00:14:56\)](#):

These are things you had to think of all the time when you were on the door, you'd stay upright. Whatever you do, don't go to ground because you got to ground, you're in a vulnerable position. Be aware, be alert, be decisive. Stay in control of your promotions. What else were there? Aggression. Control your aggression. These are little things that you had to keep in your head and then develop your abilities not only physically, but also mentally to say, okay, I'm ready. So you do the Wild Bill Hickok syndrome. You never always sit with your back to the wall. You never sit with your back to the door and things like that. And you usually got a view of a window or mirror that you can see your reflection just in case there's a space that you can't see. It just goes on and on. It gets very interesting.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:15:52\)](#):

Was this still in Ireland?

John Saint Ryan [\(00:15:55\)](#):

No, this was when we moved back to England. Yeah. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:15:59](#)):

Was it in London?

John Saint Ryan ([00:16:00](#)):

No, we were close to Manchester, a town called Blackburn.

Warwick Schiller ([00:16:09](#)):

But Manchester, as far as I know, is kind of, it was known for all the mills and stuff, the clothing mills. And so it was probably working class environment. So imagine being on a bouncer on a door in like a nightclub or pub or whatever was quite busy activity

John Saint Ryan ([00:16:29](#)):

Gets rugged. Yeah. Yeah, it does. We did a guy one time, Frank, he was a good blow, really good heart and just tough, really tough. And I was working with Frank one time, and we got into this thing where these guys were just starting on these girls and really getting really not obnoxious with 'em. And then they started getting louder and louder and we had to just go over because the girls were getting upset and worried. So I went over and I'm trying to calm things down. I got this guy and I took him away from everything. I said, look, let's just sort this out. You're really upset everybody. There's no point. You want to enjoy your time here in the nightclub. Let's just enjoy your nightclub. And I looked across and the seat Frank, and he's pounding it on this guy. He's got a hold of him and he's pounding on him. And this guy's shouting, Hey, I'm a pacifist. I'm a pacifist. And I see Frank grab all him and drag him to the stairs and throw him down the stairs to the entrance. I said, Frank, what the hell? He says, what's a pacifist, John? I said, oh, nevermind. It's too late now

Warwick Schiller ([00:17:38](#)):

Went, what's the, oh, that's funny. And so in your little bio here, after the martial arts thing, it says around that time you rode horses for fun and somehow managed to fit in an acting career, including Stunt double for Sean Connery. So when I first become aware of you on social media and started following your stuff, I used to think, my goodness, this guy sounds and looks just like Sean Connery. So you're the perfect fit for Sean Connery.

John Saint Ryan ([00:18:08](#)):

Yes. Well, it's one of those things where it just happens this way and I can't do anything much about this now. Yes, just get new teeth, I suppose.

Warwick Schiller ([00:18:21](#)):

I didn't have to do it. I was telling myself, you should ask him to do a Sean Connery. Nah, he wouldn't do that.

John Saint Ryan ([00:18:29](#)):

I'm so used to just dropping it in now and again because people like it.

Warwick Schiller ([00:18:33](#)):

So how did you get into the stunt work? Is that through the martial arts?

John Saint Ryan ([00:18:39](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, it was. So there's lots of times when I've really been very lucky in this life, and that was one of them. Again, this was when I was doing Muay Hai and much later, probably my mid twenties I guess. And a friend of mine, Steve Powell in Manchester, he was really top g k Do instructor, which is a system that Bruce Lee developed. And this was a long time before Bruce Lee was majorly famous. We were just following his ideals and Steve was working on an independent feature, and he called me, he says, Hey John, I've got a gig for you if you want, I think I can get in on this picture. We need somebody to choreograph a fight scene, but I'm busy with this side of things and I've got a part in the movie, but they want somebody who can actually do the action as well.

([00:19:39](#)):

So it'd be like both, you could get a bit of a gig on it. So I said, sure. So he arranged a meeting with the director and producer. I went over and did a little shtick for him, and they said, yeah, that's okay. We'll use you. So then I had to sort of design a choreograph a fight scene. It was just a brawl in a pub. So I was used to that. It's no big deal. And then I was very fortunate that they really liked what I did. So they give me a few lines, and this is, oh wow, I got to speak, man. This is heavy duty. So I get these lines, and I remember him clearly. And the line was, nobody tells big Nick Rafford here when he is had enough to drink, at which point the hero socks me in the jaw and knocks me flat cold.

([00:20:32](#)):

So that was my intro. And then he called me up about, I don't know, a couple of weeks later, and they said, we want you to come back in. And I'm thinking, oh, I've messed up on the fight scene. They didn't like what I did. And he said, no, no, no. We've written another little scene in here, and it's just to show the hero's empathy towards you, even though he sock you. And it was for me to get, I was coming out of this nightclub and somebody shot me and the hero was there, and he sort of cradled me as I'm dying, that kind of thing. So that was just a bit of fun. So it was my first time I got shot and killed on screen. There've been many times since.

Warwick Schiller ([00:21:13](#)):

And so how did you end up being a stunt double for Sean Connery?

John Saint Ryan ([00:21:19](#)):

I was working in Israel on a movie for Canon Pictures, and there's a long story to that. Well, there's a backstory. Do you want the backstory to that? That'll lead into it.

Warwick Schiller ([00:21:32](#)):

Hey, if it's a good story, I'm always up for a good

John Saint Ryan ([00:21:33](#)):

Story. Okay. Well, I was over doing another film A the Time, and I was with Dolph Ln, if you know, Dolph Ln the actor. And I had to do a big fight scene with him. And again, they wanted somebody who could stand up against Dolph. He's a big guy.

Warwick Schiller ([00:21:57](#)):

How tall is that guy? Is he taller than you? Yeah,

John Saint Ryan ([00:21:59](#)):

Yeah. I think he's six five. I was six four, yeah. And plus he was bigger, heavier, a lot bulkier than me, but a good guy. I like him.

Warwick Schiller ([00:22:11](#)):

So he was in Rocky two, was it Rocky two that he was

John Saint Ryan ([00:22:14](#)):

In? One of them, yeah. I dunno, one Rocky two or three, I can't remember now.

Warwick Schiller ([00:22:19](#)):

Was it around that time? Was he in really

John Saint Ryan ([00:22:21](#)):

Shape? Yeah. Yeah, it was after the Rocky deal, and he started that on his own. So he was actually the star of this particular film. It's called Coverup. And so I was meant to come in pretending he's meant to be in his hotel, and I'm pretending to be a waiter, and I come in and deliver something, and then I just come behind him and I've got this wire to choke him, and I put that over him. And then it's just this huge fight scene, which we rehearsed for two days, and they wanted a fight scene similar to Sean and Robert Shaw's fight from Russia with Love, which is a long time ago now. But that was a great fight scene that started in the railway carriage. And then Ken went everywhere else. So the stunt coordinator, the fight coordinator, big Armstrong, he says to me, when we do this, I want it to start here in the hotel room, in his room, in the lounge area, and then I want it to go to the kitchen. I want it to go through to the bathroom, and I want it to go through the bedroom. I just want you scrapping like crazy, and I want all the techniques you can imagine, kicks, punches, knees, elbows, all this stuff. So I said, great, terrific. So it was left to me to choreograph it and then present the idea to Dolph. And then he would say, yes and no, I like this and I want to put this move in. So we worked all that out.

Warwick Schiller ([00:23:50](#)):

Did he have a martial arts background?

John Saint Ryan ([00:23:52](#)):

Dol? Yeah. Oh yeah. He's Kki hin Kai. That's

Warwick Schiller ([00:23:57](#)):

That was what got him into the acting, wasn't it?

John Saint Ryan ([00:23:59](#)):

Yeah, yeah. Okay. Yeah, he won. Well, one day he called me, he says, Hey, I've got an invitation to go to this hinky school here in Tel Aviv. You want to come with me? I said, sure. Yeah. So it was to train with them, and it's always a bit of an iffy deal when somebody invites you, you just thought they're on the level with you because you can't afford to get beaten up anyway, because of the insurance thing. So I go

along, the limo comes at the hotel, and I get in with Dolph and we go to this little gym in Tel Aviv. And the guys were pretty good. Really? It was one or two because we ended up with a sparring session at the end, and there were one or two coming in a little bit heavy. And me and Dolf had a laugh about it after, because we said, we're kind of borderline there, wasn't it?

(00:24:48):

Whether you we're going to get in a big hoo-ha there. But anyway, so we did that and come to the day of the shoot, that was a funny deal. There's a huge you can't see, but there was a huge mirror in the bathroom. And the idea was I had this fancy spin kick that I used to do a jump spin kick. And the idea was for Dolf to dodge this spin kick and for me to hit the mirror and smash the mirror. So bearing in mind, we're in the studio, so they have fake walls, the mirrors hung, but it's on a fake wall. So we did the whole thing. And then I spun around and kicked Dov judged out of the way. I hit the mirror and he just went, didn't break, didn't smash, didn't crack. And he's looking at me and I'm looking ahead, the director shouts, go, alright, start again.

(00:25:41):

Reset. Okay. And action. Dodge Dolf jumps out, crack, no, no crack. It just went boom again. Oh, I said, this is ridiculous. And next thing Vix says, look, let's get this. We're going to glue a steel knot on your heel. So when you hit it, it's kind of shatter then, isn't it? I said, yeah, great idea. Terrific. So glues this knot to me heel in the shoe and do the whole thing. Fight, fight, fight. Dove dodges to the side as a spin kick and then just goes kick. And it didn't break again. I said, this is bloody ridiculous. So I said, hang on a minute. And I'm pushing on it and I thought, oh, that's what it is. Every time I kick it, the whole wall is going boom, like that. Oh,

Warwick Schiller (00:26:26):

It's absorbing the

John Saint Ryan (00:26:27):

Kick. So yeah. So I says, look, can we get a couple of the guys? So we get two grips, they go around the back and they're both pushed up against the board like that. I said, you ready? Okay. And action. Roll camera. Right off we go. Dolf Dodges out the way I spin, crunch my whole foot, my whole leg goes right through the mirror, right through to the other side. So I'm stuck there with my legs stuck right through the damn thing. Mirror is smashed and I'm hanging there. And I said, okay, I guess we'll have to cut that one as well. We did get it in the scene eventually, but oh man, that was funny. And all the time, dolls winding me up saying, not much of a kick edge on. Anyway,

Warwick Schiller (00:27:12):

So this was leading up to how you ended up being Oh, with the Sean. Sean, sorry.

John Saint Ryan (00:27:15):

Yeah. You're going to have to keep me on track, Warwick, because I'm wonder, I want to tell you things, tell stories all the time

Warwick Schiller (00:27:25):

When you've had as many life experiences that are amazing stories as you have. It's hard. I can tell all my good stories in half an hour and keep the plane and then I'm done. But you could go on for hours.



John Saint Ryan ([00:27:40](#)):

So I'll shortcut this. So there, I'm there. We do the movie with Dolphin while I'm there in the bar one night. I'm sitting there with, this might get into another long story, tell me if it just, I'm rambling too much because, anyway, so I'm in the bar in Tel Aviv. I'm sitting there having a drink and there's a guy sitting next to me on the phone, American guy, and he's cussing away and he slams the phone down. I said, what's up mate? He says, ah, God dammit, we're American movie here and it's Delta Force three, and one of the actors has bailed on us. I said, oh, what was his part? And he says he was playing a Russian commander. I said, oh really? Who was that? Says, Tony Peck, Gregory's son. I said, oh, who else is there? Oh, we got Nick Svettis, we got Mike Norris, Eric Douglas. I said, well, they're all like sons of famous actors. Yeah, yeah, that's right. That's why we had Gregory Peck son, Tony. I said, oh, okay. Well, he's not going to do it though, huh? What are you going to do? I dunno, we've got to recast it. What are you doing here? I said, oh, I'm just finishing up a movie trying to stay casual. And he says, what are you doing? I told him We're do longer in this movie. He says, what are you playing? Oh, well, a waiter.

([00:29:08](#)):

Nothing's startling night. And who tries to kill him? No, I'm an assassin, but pretend to be a waiter. So I said to him, you're really bold as brass. Probably could have had a few bes. I said, I could do that job. He said, what do you mean you could do that job? I said, well, Russian commander, I played a Russian in the theater project, which I did. That was the truth. I played a Russian in this theater thing back home and said, well, maybe I can get you a reading with the director. So I said, okay, great. So I'm thinking, this is not going to happen. These things are fairytales, this isn't happening. I went back up to my room, knock at the door, opened the door, little gal there, hands me a script. She says, you have a meeting tomorrow at 10:00 AM with the director, and this is the script you were reading for the part of Sergei. I said, oh great, thank you. So I took it immediately looking through the script thinking, bloody hell, this guy is in the whole film. This is great. This is a real good part. So I did, I'm working on my Russian accent now. I have to get into this path now, and I have to be the Russian commander of this whole voice.

Warwick Schiller ([00:30:26](#)):

You don't have to though, because Sean Connery had a Scottish accent as the Russian commander in red October.

John Saint Ryan ([00:30:32](#)):

Here you go, here you go. Now this will kill you. Well, this work. So I get the thing with the director. I go the morning the following morning, and would you believe he's an Aussie? And he says, pleased to meet you. I want to sit down and we'll talk about this now. And so would you like to read it now? I said, sure. So I start to give my best a Russian accent on carry on, and he says, hang on a minute. It's a bit thick. What? It's a little bit thick. You could do it a little bit. I said, okay, I'll turn it down a bit. I thought you wanted the real thing. I do it again. He says, look, have you seen Hump Raid October? I said, yeah. He said, well, Sean Connery. I said, I'm thinking to himself, but Sean just does Sean.

([00:31:28](#)):

It doesn't matter whether he's a cowboy in the West, and he's still darn get over there by the Rock, and it's still the same. So I did a Sean Connery impression of it, just take the piss. And he says, that's great. Well yeah, alright, let me talk to the producers now. I said, alright, so I got the job. So from that, I'll not go any further with that. There was more to that story. But then the producer, after we'd finished that, I got coverup done with Delta Long. Then I did the Delta Force three, and then we had the whole thing about they wanted to book me for three more pitches. And that's when I said, okay, if you want to book

me for three more pitches, that's great. I'd love to do it. I'd like a three pitcher deal. Never had anything like that offered, but I want to come to America and bring my family.

(00:32:19):

If you'll agree to that, then let's do it. So that's how that rolled. And I got the three deal when I was in England, they called me and they said Bobowski was, he said, I'm producing a film. It was called something Kates of Eden or something originally with Sean Cony and Lorraine Bracco, and we'd like you to double him. I said, well, I'm an actor, but you do stunt work. Yeah. And I'm like, oh damn. Like three months ago I'd have jumped to this right away, but now I'm thinking, but I want to be an actor now, not just in Stones anyway, I just said, well, what's it entail? And he said, well, how are you with heights? And I said, oh, I'm fine. Which is the biggest line known to man because is my wife said, I used to get vertigo standing on the edge of a curb.

(00:33:19):

So it's like he says, well, yeah, well you'll be in the jungle and pretty high up a hundred foot high up in the canopy and swinging around on ropes and things and there's a couple of falls and things like that, and there's a fight scene. Yeah, I can handle that. Alright. So I got that job to double show and well that took me to, it was meant to be six weeks in Veracruz south of Veracruz. It was, and it turned into six months. So I was a really good gig was that John MCT and directing and obviously being around Sean get to learn a lot. It was a really good deal.

Warwick Schiller (00:34:07):

Did you do any go to acting school or anything like that? Or you just kind of fell into the whole acting?

John Saint Ryan (00:34:11):

I fell into it simply because of the martial arts and the fight choreography and then the stomp work and then doing little bits here and there. But then I started to see the deficiencies in my ability. So I thought I better go and blown up on this. And I went to at the, what was it? Grenada television, like a college if you will, that you could go to. And so I enrolled in that and started from the ground up and worked in theater for a little bit. Did some fairly big things. I did Streetcar Named Desire with Susanna York. I also performed at the English National Opera. I'm the only person who ever fell asleep on stage at the English National Opera.

Warwick Schiller (00:35:06):

Is there a story behind that?

John Saint Ryan (00:35:07):

Well, it was just to get the gig and to actually work in London and then hopefully go on to the other things, which it did come out like that. But this particular thing, to get this one gig, they said, you've got to do this other part, which is basically just a bloody spear carrier in the English National Opera's version of Aida. There are a couple of other little things, but basically I just to walk on stage carrying a bloody spear, that's all. So was six of us. And it was while there, the lead lady comes out and stands there and blasts out her lovely voice song and it goes on and on. And I'd had a rough night the night before, we'd been on the hooch with a few of the Liz and I was really tired. And so I'm just standing there with my spear and the six of us in line. And all I remember is that when I opened my eyes again, I was the only one there and the other five had gone and I'm just waiting for the shepherd's crook to come and drag

me off stage. Well, it wasn't that it was the stage management and they didn't like that at all. They was very upset with me on that.

Warwick Schiller ([00:36:20](#)):

I bet. I was just wondering if there was a late night before that thing was the reason there was a story. So the acting college you went to, what do you think personally for yourself, what was the hardest thing that, because I think you've got to be able to reach different emotions and things like that. What was the hardest thing for you to do as far as learning to act?

John Saint Ryan ([00:36:50](#)):

The hardest thing, to be honest work was having to try to put yourself across naturally and with a reality and not just say words. Not as my friend would say, don't ever get caught on acting. You've got to be real. Now that in itself is a step that needs to be stood on and getting better. But the other thing was I'd come from Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, we talk like that and we're up and down with our ex accent and then I go back to Burnley and Blackburn and they talk like that, but it's all very strong. It's either like that or it's like that. And that's how, if I was with my friends back at home, that's how he talked like that, you see. And then when I moved with my mates back here, I talked like that, but I had a hard time.

([00:37:55](#)):

Let me see if I can, doing the B B C accent, which is in theater, right? Then they really don't want you to have a regional accent. Dear boy. It's just not acceptable. And that to me was the hardest thing to be able to be real with what I considered a really false fake accent. I could be, I can do accents up to a degree and different ones, but it's like you can tell yourself when it's not right. If I go on nce around with an Australian accent, it might be all right for people here in America, but if I do that for you, you'd be John, don't do that. It's right.

Warwick Schiller ([00:38:42](#)):

Actually, your Australian accent was pretty good before I was actually thinking that's,

John Saint Ryan ([00:38:46](#)):

But you can hear little bits and say, that's put me off. And that's where it is really bad. And now it's wonderful because I mean not just today, but for the last 10, 15, maybe I 15, certainly years, regional accents have become totally accepted in England, in the uk, just like here. I mean you can have a southern accent, you can be from Ohio, you can Midwestern accent, whatever, and people are interested. They don't just want that kind of standard Hollywood, whatever accent. But in England it was really hard to get across and it was people like Albert Finney doing room at the top and people like that who suddenly broke that barrier, which made it so much easier for you to be able to be real for me anyway, because you weren't having to think, oh, I've got to get this right. So if you're doing an accent, I mean I've played all kinds of Russians with a Scottish accent, French, all kinds of different accents.

([00:39:50](#)):

But when you have the job, then you can say, okay, I'm really going to pour myself into this and really get this right. So nobody can say, oh, that's a bad accent. It's like when we did Roar in Australia, when Heath was from Perth, Heath Fledger, and okay, I'm from Ireland, so they're looking to me to give them the real authentic. Then when I give 'em the real authentic accent in the first rushes that we did and they sent them back to la, they called back, they called the producer back in Australia where we were

filming and they said, the guys, it is too thick. Is that accent. We need to make the guys American. Well, we're supposed to be fifth century Irish. And it just was going to be phony as hell if we were going to be American accent now. So I had fought like hell. I mean I was so glad to get that job. It was wonderful. It is like a full series of a TV show, and I love the character. I didn't want to lose it, but at the same time, I didn't want it to be a plastic thing. I didn't want it to be something that's like, oh good god, I can imagine an American accent for a fifth century Irish show. It's ridiculous. Right.

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:06](#)):

Heath Ledger, was he a pretty cool dude?

John Saint Ryan ([00:41:08](#)):

Yeah, he was a lovely Ladd, really was. He was on that show. He was just like having a son. I mean, I'll be 13, nine, I think, something like that maybe. And Heath would be 17, 18. So yeah, it was good. Very super talented. It's just a damn shame it went the way it went.

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:38](#)):

Yes, it's going way too early. So in your bio here says then you immigrated to the US in 1992 and you were introduced to the Amazing Horseman, Tom Dorrance and became an avid student and friend to Tom. How did you meet Tom Dorrance?

John Saint Ryan ([00:41:53](#)):

Through Ray Ray Hunt. Well,

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:55](#)):

How did you meet Ray Hunt then?

John Saint Ryan ([00:41:57](#)):

Well, through my C P A, she was a horse woman, her and her husband both. And he worked at C B Ss and they said to me one time, you like horses, don't you? I said, oh yeah, heck yeah. So you've got to come and see this guy Han. I said, where is he? Why is it Bob Wagner's wrench? Robert Wagner, the actor, he had a wrench in Hidden Hills in Valley. And so I said, yeah, sure, I'll show up. Yeah, when is it? Well, it starts Friday and it goes through till Monday. I said, oh, well I'll maybe come come down on Friday. I'm not sure about weekend because with the family and that, so I got down there early.

([00:42:41](#)):

I ostensibly starting at nine, so I like to get there at eight 30, just check in and meet up with people. And there's this guy sat on a rock with his horse by the side just on the lead reins. And he's talking and I'm listening to him and I'm thinking, no, I wonder that this is the guy. And he's just talking and spouting things and talking and I'm thinking, man, this guy's interesting. And then Barbara came and she said, oh, have you met Ray? I said, no, not yet. No, he's just busy talking teaching people. I like the guy. He's really interesting. She said, wait until you see him ride. Okay, yeah, this is good. So then he gets on a horse and first morning's always the cult starting with Ray. And just that sort of blew my mind because I was used to starting the horses in England, totally different.

([00:43:39](#)):

And I'm thinking of what the heck's going on here? And then on the second day, I think he's saying people can get on. I'm like, oh my Lord, this is going to be a hell of a thing. So yeah, we got interested and I got talking to Ray and he was just a good bloke. I loved the guy. He would give you any help possible. He would just help you as long as you were trying. They didn't suffer fools gladly, which is a lot of the people that I know, Sean, the same kind of thing. People might say bad things about Sean, like they said bad things about Ray being gruff or whatever. But it's basically because they know what they're doing and they're trying to help you. But if you don't want that help or if you're not putting your effort in, then don't waste my time because there is somebody out there who does want my help and I want to spend it on them. And that's how I saw Ray in that same light. So watching him was marvelous. And then it went from there to getting a chance. I don't know how he came about, but he says to me, you got a horse, haven't you? I said, yeah. I said, but I haven't got on him yet. He says, well bring him down. So this is after the second day, and they already had stuff like that. So I hold my horse down the next day and yeah, put him in the round pen, just join in with everybody.

[\(00:45:05\)](#):

It was funny because I thought, oh boy, I hope I don't show myself up here and I don't know what this horse is going to be like this, because I've never started a horse like this. Were you

Warwick Schiller [\(00:45:15\)](#):

An experienced rider at this point in time?

John Saint Ryan [\(00:45:17\)](#):

Not really. I mean, I could stay on and I had an idea, put it this way, the old English way of riding, it was literally the gal that told me, the old dame that taught me was good in many respects as far as keeping your balance and that you're not allowed to touch your reins until you've gone on a little flat saddle and you can have your arms outstretched and walk truck canter. You

Warwick Schiller [\(00:45:43\)](#):

Know what I think then it's be more of that actually lunge line lessons where people learn to actually have an independent seat first before. I think that's not a bad thing. I don't think,

John Saint Ryan [\(00:45:55\)](#):

Oh, it's a great thing. It's just everybody wants is in a hurry. It's the same with when you start horses. I mean to me, I used to do it like Ray and just to get things going and I could do it. And then it became one of these literally a challenge for me when I decided I'm going to walk away from acting and just do horsemanship. I said, okay. We literally sold the house in Simi Valley, moved and bought a ranch in the middle of nowhere in Tehachapi Mountains, and then set up shop as to her and said, well, okay, bring me, anybody got a horse? They want me to start Saturday morning, bring it down and I'll start it for you. No charge, just to get people to see me and come and see me and say, alright, some people are trying to set you up, this guy's full of crap and let's give him this horse.

[\(00:46:53\)](#):

And so unfortunately there were a few like that, but I still rode him, but it didn't make 'em a good horse at the end of it. When I say a good horse, it didn't make them a broke horse, it's just I got by, I filled in for the horse where I could and the horse and went along with the horse and then directed and got 'em. Okay. So they didn't buck and run off or anything like that, but certainly wasn't a trained horse. Whereas ideally in England you'd spend a month, two months, something like that in hand and lunge line, long

lining and all that kind of thing. So I think there's a balance to be had between those two things, really. Right. Yep.

Warwick Schiller ([00:47:39](#)):

Okay. So when did you meet Tom?

John Saint Ryan ([00:47:42](#)):

Oh, well, that was Ray. He said, you got to go and see Tom because I keep going on about how much I enjoyed being around Ray and learning things off him. And he was wonderful. I mean, when we did the cult starting video series for him, and I didn't want anything for it. I was just going to and direct a little bit with my friend and he said, John, this is great. Anytime you want to come to a clinic, no charge. You're welcome anytime. Bring your horses. So hell, I just took advantage of that and showed up wherever I could to learn. And then that was when he said, look, you think I'm good? You should go and see Tom. I said, yeah, you keep telling me about that. And other people say that, but where is he? He said, well, he is in Salinas.

([00:48:37](#)):

Where the hell is Salinas? Well, it's six hours north. Of course they didn't want to drive six hours nowhere then. But then people kept badgering me and saying, you should go and see him. And I thought, well, does he want to see me for crying out loud? So Tom Johnson, a nice, really nice fella, he gave me Tom's and Margaret's phone number and he said, give him a call. I've spoke to him about it, so you've got a bit of an in there. I said, oh boy. So I called him up and damn Tom didn't answer. And Hi, I'm John St. Ryan, I know you don't know me. And I was kind of nervous. I didn't think, I don't know what I'm going to say to this fellow. And then Tom goes, oh yeah, John Saint Ryan, I've heard of you. No, dear mate, what have you heard? Oh, well, yeah, what did you want? I said, well, I wondered about maybe sometime, are you doing any clinics? No, I don't like to do clinics. I said, oh, well, if you ever do 'em, will you let me know? Oh, sure. So there kind of a little bit of waffly stuff there. And shortly after that I get a call and he says, I'm doing a clinic in Bill De VA's place in Indio. And Indio is down south near Palm Springs Palm.

Warwick Schiller ([00:50:11](#)):

Yeah, it's out in the middle of nowhere in the desert there.

John Saint Ryan ([00:50:13](#)):

Yeah, exactly. But they had a Bill DeVein, he had a wonderful polo outfit. He loved polo and Ky Lord die is a great horseman, and he was working for Bill. And so he arranged this for Tom. He arranged this. So I went down, and this is where it all fell apart. This is where my acting career fell apart. I called my agent, I said, look, I'm going to do this thing on Friday through to Monday, and I have to travel to Indio, so I'll be out in the pitch kind of thing if you need me for anything. Oh yeah, okay, don't worry. It's pretty quiet at the moment. So I set off on Thursday afternoon to get down there at night to book out. I booked in a motel and on the way down phone rings as the agent. He says, John, great news. I said, what?

([00:51:10](#)):

He said, I got an interview for you for Eastwood's new picture. I said, when he says tomorrow, I said, ah, shit, I can't, what do you mean you can't? I said, well, I'm going down to this clinic. What are you sick or something? I said, no, I'm not sick. I've got a clinic, like a doctor clinic. It's a horsemanship clinic where you learn things. What do you need to learn? I said, how handle horses? I want to see these guy. He's

really good. Just can you put 'em off till the day after? And I'll come back because I'm halfway there now. I'll see what I can do. So he was really pissed off with me. Anyway, so anyway, I got down there and he called me that evening and says, you got to come back tomorrow. Then I said, okay. Anyway, that Friday, not tomorrow.

(00:51:58):

Yeah, Friday. So that Friday morning I went down thinking I'm going, I'll just watch a couple hours and then I'll shoot back. I can get back in time for this. I think it made at three o'clock or something like that. So I started watching and I'm watching Tom and I'm thinking, this is amazing. This guy's got 20 odd riders in this clinic. There are all kinds of weird disciplines from flat saddle jumpers to raining guys, to just your regular cowboy, to polo people, to dressage riders, and they're all over the place. And he always made me laugh. He said, he gets on the mic and everybody's wallering around and doing their own thing. You know how it is in the clinic. At first, people like to, they get nervous or they're doing their own thing. And he says, okay, everybody. And then there's a hush descends and you're thinking, okay, he's going, everybody line up, do something or get on the wall, get on the rail.

(00:52:56):

Tom just says, what would anybody like to do? I thought, great. So that's how it started. And then he just won by one. People had asked, can you help with this? Can you help with that? And I was just mesmerized. I just sat there close to him and listened and watched him as he looked, because watching him was amazing. He took everything in. He wasn't just focusing on one, the people he might be working with, helping this guy stop his horse, but he'd be fully aware of somebody about, I dunno, 50 yards away, having a little bit of a trouble and he'd just make a note and tell 'em to try this. Okay, now go back to this. Just managing people. It was marvelous. Anyway, that's when I called the agent and I said, I can't come back. I got to do this. And he was so annoyed with me anyway, I didn't get anywhere with the Clint Eastwood picture, but So

Warwick Schiller (00:53:55):

What Eastwood picture was it? Was it a big one?

John Saint Ryan (00:53:57):

I don't know. I didn't want to know after that. I just thought, yeah, I don't only think it was Mystic River actually, because it wasn't him. He was directing it. How wasn't

Warwick Schiller (00:54:06):

He was directing it.

John Saint Ryan (00:54:07):

Yeah. And yeah, I was kind of looking forward to it because a friend of mine was saying, when you work with him, he's different. I said, what do you mean he's different? Well, you usually get, okay, roll sound, roll camera. And then the director says, and action. And then cut. Ward goes. Okay, roll sound, roll camera. Go ahead. That's enough of that. So go ahead. It's action. And that's enough of that he's caught. Okay, I got it. So I was kind of looking forward to seeing that.

Warwick Schiller (00:54:51):

So so far we've had the Sean Connery accent. We've had the Australian in the bar accent, and we've had, oh, we've had Tom Doris's accent, which was really quite good. And now we've got clin eastwick. There's no end to this guy's talent. The thing I wanted to ask you about Tom is I never met any of them, but just the things I read and the stories I hear from people, and then your previous fascination with the martial arts, and it's like the martial arts kind of come from that Eastern philosophy sort of thing. And Tom, the stuff I've heard about Tom and Bill, they just sound like they had that Eastern philosophy mentality sort of thing without actually studying Eastern philosophy, if you get what I mean.

John Saint Ryan ([00:55:49](#)):

Yes. Yeah. And that's one of the reasons that I talked to Margaret about this, because after Tom died, it was like wanted to get a legacy going where people would have access to his work. And I said to Margaret, the thing is it's not just like, it's not a method. It's not like you can write it down one-on-one gets you two, you are not going to write a textbook. It's a way. And she said, what do you mean it's a way? I said, well, in Eastern philosophy, martial arts in particular, they call it a way. It's a way of being. And that was the thing that, it was interesting because it had come about, somebody had asked Margaret about how Tom looked at spirit and they were suggesting it was something kind of religious. And she said, I had to correct people on that because it's not about religion, it's about with Tom.

([00:56:57](#)):

You would ask him about that. And people say, well, you go to church. He said, no, I don't need to go to church. This is the way I live and this is life and it's all around you. I don't need to go to church. The life is here. It's wonderful. And that way of going about your own life. I know the biggest thing with Tom was to avoid turmoil as he put it, he hated it. And there was the whole thing about the Horse Whisperer book and the movie and so on that he got embroiled in. And I was with him. This was when he was alive, and I was with him when that was all going on. And for me, I was thinking, this is a wonderful opportunity to bring people's awareness to Tom. And he just did not want anything to do with it.

([00:57:50](#)):

I said, why? And I'd had this before when I used to go up and spend time with him and take horses up. And then when I wanted to make a video of his work, he'd say, well, it's difficult. It's hard to see. It's hard to explain, and it's probably not worth your effort. You have other things you can do. I said, no, I want to do this, Tom. And I said, it's because it's a way of working. It's about how you present yourself to the horse, how you understand things of the horse. I mean, now there is so much wonderful information out that people should be able to get a grip of this much better if they can sort out the week from the chaff as to where, and with Tom, it was like, well, this is how I am. This is the way I like to help people.

([00:58:46](#)):

If anybody gets any good out of it, then I'm happy. But I don't need anything other than that. So his way of life, if you will, was by that, was about that. And Ray, I know was in great admiration of that. He said to me about Tom's the most self-disciplined man I know. He just incredible. And I wish I was like that. And Ray was great discipline person anyway, but he just looked up to him so much. And then he'd say, he told me to put him on a pedestal, and I don't want to be on a pedestal either.

([00:59:31](#)):

He admired Tom so much, but people tend to want to do that. And sometimes human nature is such that you feel like, yeah, I feel better now that somebody's made me feel sound good or whatever. But in reality, life is life. And if you help people and you want, I don't mean to be a pushover or anything like that, but that whole philosophy for me of kindness, that's important. And I've try to help people just like



Tom helped me, Ray helped me, but with Tom in particular, because I mean, although times I was with Tom and I never had to do anything, give him anything, no money or nothing, it was just like, yeah, we'll just do this. We'll do that. You can stay here. And I'd stay and Margaret be making meals and I couldn't pay him anything. So the only way I could pay them back was I came up with this idea, and this was a bit selfish, I must admit, because I needed that help with this book. True Unity. When Millie edited that book, Millie Hunt, which is Ray's first wife, she literally transcribed everything that Tom said from a little tape recorder and typed it up and then she'd show it to Tom and say, this is what you said. Shall I edit this down? No, no, don't leave it as it is. If people can understand it, that's fine. Okay. So that's how it was. Well, it's hard to understand how you read Warwick community. It's a little bit

Warwick Schiller ([01:01:11](#)):

Confucius say type

John Saint Ryan ([01:01:13](#)):

Stuff. Yeah, yeah, it is. Yeah. You've got to be ready for the first time you read it, you think, what the hell's this got to do with horses? Well, certainly the first part, but that is the reality because it's how he was raised, which made him the man he was, which put him in the situations that he was and how he dealt with it. And that's why he put that in at the beginning because he wanted people to see, I'm just a regular guy and this is how things came about for me because I worked at it. I wanted to. And so when I got reading, I thought him, you know what? I'm going to just go in the studio. I'm going to record it. I'm going to narrate the damn thing. Then I can put it in the truck and play it and then stop and think, because sitting at night reading it, you know what it's like when you're reading it and you think, I've just read two paragraphs and I keep thinking about the first paragraph because you're not focused.

([01:02:07](#)):

So with the audio idea, I thought, okay, so I recorded it and I play it. Listened to what he said, stop, then drive around a bit with that going in my head. Then I play the next bit and so on and so forth. And then some friends that'd be with me, they'd say, this is great. And then we'd talk about it. You'd be able to just talk it over with your friends. And so then I said to Tom, I've got this tape and it's going to be really useful for people. I think I'll give it you and we'll get it duplicated and put it up for sale, and then you'll make a bit of money off it and you deserve it. You're only selling your book for crying out loud. It's one book. So he wasn't up for it at first, but eventually, yeah, okay.

([01:02:54](#)):

It's a good idea. And it was good. We'd put it on a cassette tape back in the day and then transferred it to cd. It needs to be redone again. I'd like to be good if they put it up on Audible or something like that for somebody. And then after that I wanted to try and try and get some video of Tom working and teaching. So that was a labor of love was that I started off, I don't know, maybe in March I'd gone up and I said with the idea, so they gave me some tapes that Tom Johnson had recorded and they said, I said to 'em, I'll edit a little section together so you can see where I'm going with this. It's not old fancy jazzy or anything like that. It's just the real thing, what you're doing. And I won't edit things out, I'll just try and keep it tight and clean.

([01:03:54](#)):

But there's some sound problems, there's some audio visual problems and that. So I did it and I took about 15 minutes out and so we're there and in the living room and we're just had dinner. And I said, okay, you're ready to watch this. Okay, yeah, let's give it a watch. Said, alright, sit back. And he gets in his armchair and puts his feet up and I start playing it. And it's this section where he's talking to people

about how to set this horse up to do this particular thing. And he rocks back a couple of times and we've only been watching five minutes of it and then goes on another five minutes and I can see him looking down and I'm thinking, oh dang, what have I done wrong here? It looks good to me. Does this. And anyway, about 15, 14, 15 minutes in, he says, well, it's a good try, John, but I don't think it's going to work for people.

[\(01:05:00\)](#):

I don't think they're going to understand it. I said, well, what are they not going to understand? Well, what works for this horse here? They might try that on another horse and it won't be fitting for that horse. And I'm thinking, oh, okay, let me do a little edit and I'll make a note and I'll come back. So this went on through the year and I went back six times with this. Finally I'm thinking, I said, de Joyce my wife. I said, you know what, it's got to work this time because I don't know what else I can do. And I've done this, that and the other and tried a different kind of approach and I just wait for the dogs to start barking

Warwick Schiller [\(01:05:43\)](#):

Just in case. Oh, they're fine.

John Saint Ryan [\(01:05:44\)](#):

Alright. So I went back, I think it was about September, October, and I got these and I sat there and it was actually 25 minutes, I added some more stuff in, sat through the whole thing and I'm sitting on the floor next to him watching him, watching the screen, watching him and then, well, that looks pretty good. Maybe we can do something with this. I thought, yes, score. Great. So that was greetings. That was the first one I did with him. And it was so nice to be able to give something back because like I say, he never charged me anything. So being able to create these videos and then seldom, and they took the money for it and that was my gift, if you will. But it was really just a repayment for their kindness.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:06:44\)](#):

The thing about Tom, like I said, I'd never met the guy, but from what I've heard, and a lot of people, you're probably the same too. But there's what you do, there's your physical movements, but then your intention. But then there's this energy, and I met an older guy a couple of years ago who had been friends with Tom and hadn't seen him for a number of years. He told me a story about he hadn't seen him for a number of years, and then Tom came by to visit him and the guy's name was John and John said he had this barn cat that was wild. He said, I knew it was black and white, but I couldn't tell you where the patches were in it. I never saw it for long enough. It would flit across the barn aisle here and flit across the barn aisle there.

[\(01:07:34\)](#):

But he never saw it for long enough to know exactly what it looked like. And Tom came to visit him one day and he pulled up outside in his truck and they kind of walked in the barn and they sat down. They started to visit for a while, and John said after about half an hour that cat, I saw it flit across down the end of the barn aisle. And then a little while later, that cat was sitting in the middle of the end of the barn aisle. Little while later, that cat starts walking up the barn aisle and John says, this is the first time I've ever actually laid eyes on this cat and tells got a black patch on his right ear sort of thing. And he said that cat came, ended up coming up and came out and rubbed his head on Tom's leg. And he said, Tom stayed for two days and the cat followed him around like a dog. And when he left the cat went back to being wild,

John Saint Ryan ([01:08:19](#)):

Being feral.

Warwick Schiller ([01:08:21](#)):

And that's the thing, you cannot

John Saint Ryan ([01:08:25](#)):

Teach him express sometimes. Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([01:08:27](#)):

You can't express it. And what is it? I mean, it comes from a lifetime. It comes from a lifetime of being a certain way, but it's not that thing there that you can't, that's unquantifiable. But

John Saint Ryan ([01:08:44](#)):

I think that's one of the things that really struck me about him where he was so centered, he was sold there and grounded in real things in life. It's hard to express, like you said, but those are the things that you just marvel at that that's what I want to be able to be. I want to be able to understand an animal because when I was talking about the martial arts thing and I said, you get to be aware of your surroundings and you have to look out for things, but that's on the sort of, you might say, well, that's kind of just fighting and martial arts and the martial way, but it's also part of the ideal of being fully aware so that you can avoid problems so you can avoid turmoil. And that's what Tom would be trying to do. So when he was thinking about how he could help animals or people that was part of it, he'd look at it and he's famous phrase of Let's see what happens before what happens, happens, things like that. He'd see it and you might see it like 10 seconds later or something. So I was trying to think, I've got to keep more aware of this. He just had that ability and it made other things feel better, like other animals, other people. That was always the one thing I said to Joyce, anytime I went to Tom, I came back feeling marvelous. He was better than any damn drug or any booze or anything. He was like, damn, I feel good.

Warwick Schiller ([01:10:25](#)):

It's funny, I had a young man from England on the podcast last year, his name's Ben Atkinson does some stunt work. I dunno if you've ever heard of Ben does a lot of liberty work, does quite a lot of stunt work, and he was telling me about how he went to this Frederick Pinon, a couple of different Frederick Pinon clinics. And I have heard that there's a vibe about Frederick. And so I said to Ben, I said, so what's Frederick like to be around? Because I was kind of getting that, is there a vibe? I didn't say that, but I said, what's he like to be around? And he goes, well, my mom says I love sitting next to Fred because when I do, I feel like I smoke the joint.

John Saint Ryan ([01:11:10](#)):

There you go.

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:11](#)):

There's just this energy, like you said, you feel better after being around him.

John Saint Ryan ([01:11:18](#)):

Yeah, he was never judgmental about things. He'd talk about different people or different situations and non clinics in particular where people would bring him horses and And some things he would tell me in confidence where he'd just say, look, and this is for you John. I don't want this for anybody else. And yeah, I won't tell anybody else. And I wouldn't, it's not that he was being disparaging about people, he was just pointing out things that they were doing not just right. And that was the best example for me not to do it like that. Because so many times when you're younger, I mean I was in mid thirties, forties, you've got physical confidence if you'll prowess or whatever his strength. And a couple of times, well one in particular, I was up there with a horse and he'd always sit in the cart, either the golf cart. Then when he got his mule after, he'd just have his faith up and he'd be watching me and then he'd shout out, okay, John, let's visit. I'd come back. Now it's not about muscle and bone, John. I'm thinking what? I wouldn't think I was being rough or anything, but he was meaning that there's other ways of approaching He out on another time lecture, he says, now you might think it's okay now, but when you get older you're going to wish you'd learned a different way.

[\(01:13:03\)](#):

So okay, I get it.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:13:05\)](#):

Yeah. You said he was non-judgmental and that vibe he had about the thing with the cat, there's something about that non-judgmental thing I've been playing with for a few years now. My regular podcast listeners would know. But about four years ago, I spent a year doing a particular type of therapy. And one of the things they had us do was for homework was count our judgmental thoughts. And one of the things I found was when you become aware of your judgmental thoughts, you become aware of how many you have. And for me in particular, I imagine a lot of people would too. You become aware of how many you have about yourself too, when you probably start to be a little nicer to yourself. But at the end of that year, I didn't do any clinics that year. I didn't travel at all. And at the end of the year, I went back to traveling again.

[\(01:14:00\)](#):

And the first airport I was in, I was walking through this airport and I'm a people watcher. I know I'm a people watcher and I'm walking to my gate and all these people are walking the other way and I'm watching these people, they walk by and all of a sudden it dawned on me, oh, I'm not thinking nice things about these people. I'm like, you need to step away from the hamburger stand. You need to put some more clothes on. You've got way too many clothes on them. Did you even look at the mirror in the morning? This constant stream of this stuff going through my head. And I realized I was doing it and I'd never realized I'd done it before and I've been doing it forever. And so then I thought, okay, I'm going to change that. And as people were walking by me, I looked them in the eye and I'd give 'em a little eye smile and I'd think to them may be happy, maybe happy, maybe happy.

[\(01:14:47\)](#):

And some people, most people won't even look at you, but some people, you catch their eye and they see, you look at 'em and they look away. But some people, you give 'em an eye smile and they give you an eye smile back and you get that little exchange of energy. But by the time I got to my gate, I'm like, Ooh, I have this different feeling inside me. I have this light, airy feeling inside of me instead of this dull, dark feeling inside me. And that's what the whole therapy was about. But just changing my thoughts about what I was looking at, looking positive, being positive versus negative. I had a completely different feeling inside me. And you can imagine a lifetime of that might be what might attract a cat. You know what I mean?

John Saint Ryan ([01:15:34](#)):

Yeah, yeah. And I think it's really interesting that because when people are, unfortunately, we're more and more partisan in so many ways, whether it's the obviously political thing, but my understanding of it goes back to when I was a kid and with the religious partisanship in Ireland, and it was just like, come on, blame me. This is silly. And so with the martial arts thing, it just started me thinking about that more and more. And sometimes I would do, like you said, to catch yourself thinking things. And I was with, it was funny, it was a biker that I was kind of hanging around in a biker gang when I was about 16, 17. And I was just ragging on somebody, look at that, whatever over there. And this big guy turns around. I was always the kid. I was like 16, 17, and they were in the twenties and he big bruiser Hell's Angel type.

([01:16:41](#)):

And he turned and looked at me, so you might want to look at yourself sometime son. Like what? Just like that. And I remember I thought that wasn't what I was expecting. I thought he'd make a fur democracy of something. The guy that I was making fun of, I remember going home at night and thinking, looking in the mirror and thinking, damn, yeah, asshole, don't do that anymore. It's like, I dunno. It's so easy to do. And that's the thing that bothers me now where there's so much division. Have you ever read any of Krishna Ty's work? Yeah. Yeah. One of the biggest things, and this was when I was a kid, when I was younger anyway, and I remember reading this and he talked about division and he said, this is the worst thing that division in life and the way we divide things up and we have this is better than that.

([01:17:36](#)):

And as a kid, I'm thinking, I was reading this stuff at 15, 16 years old, I'm thinking, but my soccer team, I'm going to support them. So the hell with that team over there. But that was the sort of basic simplicity of it, but it permeates through everything. And that was the thing about the martial arts, like master scan, who was the guy who really elevated my skills in Muay Hai. He's still around and we're still good friends. And he always said, when you fight and you're in the ring, you make sure you show respect to your opponent, win or lose. And that's a simple thing, but it was heartfelt. And if you won, you'd you'd pay respects to your opponent. If you lost, he would often pay respects to you before you could pay respects to him. And it was real. It was from the heart. So those are important things. Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([01:18:33](#)):

This podcast is about trying to figure out how people ended up, where they ended up mostly. I really think that it's really your mindset that gets, you create your own reality, and so the thoughts you think have a lot to do with stuff and you just kind of filled in some blanks for me. Right. Then you failed to mention earlier on that when you were 15 years old, you're reading Krishna Nati. Not a lot of 15 year olds are reading Krishna Moti. So

John Saint Ryan ([01:19:03](#)):

Yeah, I just got into all that kind of thing because it just fascinated me, all the philosophers and it just stood out. He had another thing where he was talking about the river of life and the way that we try to achieve things and we try to get things. And in doing that, we spend so much time trying to get these things that we miss life and life is going by. We should be embracing everything and also teaching people how to live. You teach people how to get a job. You teach people how to be successful or whatever. Do we really teach people how to live? That's really a philosophical outlook.

Warwick Schiller ([01:19:52](#)):

Well, I mentioned Tom before when I said it's very Eastern philosophy type stuff, the way he looked at the world. I remember reading an article about a clinic he did one time and he was helping this kid and was really working on something really, really basic. And they said he was so process oriented, not results oriented. And one of the most spiritual ancient Hindu practices is called karma yoga. And Karma yoga is focusing on a task with no thought as to the outcome of that task. And it's just that mindset, that mindset is as old as time itself sort of thing.

John Saint Ryan ([01:20:35](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. I think that's why he liked to do these little puzzles, like his string trick and things like that. It wasn't the, oh, look how clever you are. It looks like this string would be tangled up. He was more interested in showing you the process so that you were learning how to search things out, how it would work and how it wouldn't work. So yes, you had to do it in a particular way for it to just drop off your fingers, but that wasn't, it was about thinking through and all the puzzles. I used to take puzzles up, I'd find something in, I don't know, like a toy store or something. I'd say, I'll get you with this. And I'd take him out with two horseshoes twisted together, that kind

Warwick Schiller ([01:21:28](#)):

Of stuff. With the ring in the middle. Yeah.

John Saint Ryan ([01:21:30](#)):

Yeah. And he'd, yeah, clink, clink, clink. Here you go.

([01:21:36](#)):

Just handed it to you, back to you. Oh, one time he'd get this thing. Oh man, I felt foolish. It was something like a ring with a nut and bolt on, and it looked like it had been welded, so you couldn't, well, he says, now split those down, separate those bloody well, it's welded here and that, so I can't unscrew the knot, so I'm not even going to bother wasting my time with that and this, that and the other. Well, I spent 15 minutes and I'm fed up him. Can we go and ride a horse or something? Well, do you know, I wonder. And he said, no, I can't. And he just took it out of me and he unscrewed the knot and I thought, well, it wasn't meant to be unscrable. And he said, well, you never tried.

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:25](#)):

Well, it had a little dotter weld on it. It look was welded on there. Yeah, I thought

John Saint Ryan ([01:22:28](#)):

It was

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:28](#)):

Welded on. The weld is like my weld. It was only attached to one side and not

John Saint Ryan ([01:22:32](#)):

Exactly. Yeah, I'm thinking

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:34](#)):

You've done that without trying. You could

John Saint Ryan ([01:22:35](#)):

At least have tried it.

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:39](#)):

So as my listeners, regulars would know, I send out 20 questions to my guests and they get to choose a number of them. Then I bring them up on the podcast. And when I first sent them out to John, he misunderstood the exercise and he actually answered the questions and emailed 'em back to me. And so I'm actually going to read, I want to read the question and then I'm going to read out John's answer and then I want you to elaborate on it. This is going to be fascinating. So the first one that John chose was what book do you recommend the most? Not necessarily your favorite to read, but one you feel everyone needs to read. And you chose the Varieties of Scientific Experience by Carl Sagan, and you said, if Read With an Open Mind, it really presents a fascinating view of the cosmos. And despite his incredible intellect, he had the ability to inform those of us lacking any formal education such as myself, on the Wonders of the Universe. I have not read that book, but it sounds fascinating. Can you elaborate on it?

John Saint Ryan ([01:23:39](#)):

It really is wonderful. It has so much in it, which is, I mean, technically it's incredible because of the things it could do, measuring the galaxies and all the rest of it. But overall, the way that you find it absolutely awe inspiring of the way it presents it. When I was a kid, well, when I was younger, he had a TV show called Cosmos, and I used to love watching that because you'd see the images of galaxies and stars and he'd talk about it. But this book really gets into detail and goes back and talks about how old the earth is and how old these things are and the galaxies. And there's not just one galaxy. They go on and on, and then there's all these other things involved. But the beauty for me is just thinking about how you view life. We're so small, we're on this little spec, little blue speck in this galaxy, and who knows what else is out there, who knows?

([01:24:45](#)):

It's hard to put into words, but it really just, the book opens up your mind, your thought, and also your appreciation for this beautiful planet we're on right now as it is. And that's why he's so, and one of the reasons he wanted to, I think, wanted to write the book. I think it is based from the Gifford lectures, which he did later on in his life, and he wanted people to take care of it, take care of the planet, be open-minded and so on and so forth, but know that we are the ones that have to start to think about looking after it. You cannot rely on other people. You can't rely on people running the country and so on and so forth. And yes, you're going to have some people argue and say, this is not right, climate change, the hoo-ha, blah, blah, blah.

([01:25:42](#)):

But you have to pick the people that you really understand it, and you have to push those things. You cannot rely on, say, you can't rely on the governments because we're in a wonderful place here in a way, because we have some pretense of democracy in this country. When I say that, I'm not being facetious. It is just, unless money is not being pushed into the hands of these people who are supposed to be running the country on our behalf, until they get rid of that, it's never going to be real. It's just going to be people running the country because they get paid from this and this. What you want is the groundswell of people who come in and say, look, we are working for the people. We are working to get this better for the country, irrespective of my pocketbook or my shell company and so on. I'm sorry, I'm getting into politics and I shouldn't do that.

Warwick Schiller ([01:26:49](#)):

Well, you're kind of really talking about the galaxies of the earth itself actually. But it's funny when you remember there was a really good show on Netflix a couple of years ago, a documentary that Will Smith was the host of, and it was called One Strange Rock, I think. But it was about the point of view of all these astronauts that how their thoughts changed once they actually left the world or the earth, sorry, and viewed the earth from outer space, how their mind was blown when they came back to it. It was not the same ever again. They kind of see the size of it. They also kind of be aware of the smallness of it. Yeah.

John Saint Ryan ([01:27:33](#)):

And how we're just a spec and what we, it makes me laugh. We talk about being famous and so on and so forth. And that's the other thing Krishnamurti used to talk about, that people want to be famous, they want to know things, they want to be known, and it might be good for some people, but been there a little bit, done that for a year, and it's not that much fun. You get some benefits. Sure, you get a nice first class flights and you get the best seat in the restaurant and so on and so forth. But other than that, you've got people on your back all the time. You can't go anywhere without somebody shoving a camera in your face and so on. And it gets to be silly, really silly. It's very

Warwick Schiller ([01:28:21](#)):

Intrusive. As Jim Carey said, I think everybody should be rich and famous so that they know it's nothing you'd ever really want. Or Mike Tyson also has a good one. Mike Tyson says, anybody who thinks having a lot of money is going to make you happy ain't never had a lot of money.

John Saint Ryan ([01:28:36](#)):

Yeah, yeah, that's true.

Warwick Schiller ([01:28:39](#)):

I forget who I had on the podcast here a while ago, but someone I had on the podcast was a C-level ceo type coach, that sort of thing. And they said, I remember maybe there was a psychiatrist, I can't remember, but I remember have someone talking to someone one day and they said, the person said, I remember when my bank account went from starting with M'S to starting with a B, and it didn't do a thing. It was like, okay, it now starts with a B, but I don't feel any different.

John Saint Ryan ([01:29:18](#)):

Yeah, yeah, you are what you are. I remember talking to somebody, they said, you quit acting. I said, no, I didn't quit. I just kind of moved away from it. Well, you just went and bought this horse wrench. I said, yeah, and you've had it for three or four years now. And I said, yeah, why did it work out? I said, well, basically I saved up about a million bucks for movies and I put it into a horse wrench, and here I'm four years later and I act in Korea amounts to about a million bucks worth of horse shit. Really? I think I stole that off. Bob Ham. I think he said something like that.

Warwick Schiller ([01:29:59](#)):

That's a good one. So your next question was if you could spread a message across the world, one that people would listen to, what would you say or your favorite quote? And it was a favorite quote, which



was from the Dalai Lama, and it said, this is my simple religion. There are no need for temples, no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain. Our own heart is our temple. The philosophy is kindness.

John Saint Ryan ([01:30:28](#)):

Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([01:30:29](#)):

That's a good one. Yeah.

John Saint Ryan ([01:30:31](#)):

And it's a little bit like I was saying before Warwick about Tom, where Margaret said the whole idea of spirit don't get carried away and start saying it's about a religious thing because Tom didn't need to go to church. It's all around him. And that's what he was impressed with and being good, being helpful. And as the Dalai Lama said, if you're kind, then everything, it works so much better. And it's not being naive. I'll talk to some people about this and say, yeah, but what about the guy did this to you? Those people who shot those people, killed their children. And that I said, this human nature, you're never going to just switch that off. And you're always going to be aware of it. And you are not going to just blindly go through life trusting that nothing ever, nothing bad's ever going to happen, but you make an effort to be kind to people.

([01:31:34](#)):

And sometimes that can help just break through some of these people, but not all. We're very, very violent species. If you look historically, we're incredibly violent. Look at everything that's going on from medieval times and going back and even to current times, you look at all the wars, I mean, it's just obscene. Look what's happening in Russia now with the Ukraine deal, that what they're doing in the war, there is no different to what was being done in previous wars. And it's people, armchair warriors, pushing real people around with no real care or thought because you're not risking your life on the battlefield. You're just pushing all your people out there. So yeah, we're violent. Unfortunately, we need to change. It's not going to happen next week.

Warwick Schiller ([01:32:33](#)):

It's interesting. That quote was from the Dalai Lama, and if you think about that, think about say meditation practice. What is a meditation practice supposed to do? It's supposed to slow everything down. The point I'm trying to get at here is the way Tom and Bill, and I've heard the brother, brother Fred too kind of lived their life. They lived kind of simply, but they were very present and very, very present. I would say very in the moment, actually a couple of years ago or few years, probably five years ago now, I was a presenter at the Best Horse Practice Summit in Durango, Colorado. And it was a two day deal, and on the Saturday night or whatever day it was, the middle night, they had a dinner and Randy Reman and Brian Bert were the entertainment for the night. And they sat up on stage and told Bill and Tom Ray stories, and it was fascinating, but they told a story, and you've probably heard it from somewhere, but they told a story about they had a herd of registered Angus cows, and I think Bill went away.

([01:33:58](#)):

Oh no, maybe Tom went away. I can't remember which brother went away, but one of 'em went away and the other one pulled all the tail tags off. So now it's just a herd of black cows, but I guess they had tattoos under their lip, like race horses do. Anyway, whichever other brother came back said, where's all

the tail tags? And the other brother said, oh, I took 'em off. And he's like, why? And he goes, how are we going to tell 'em apart? And he goes, oh, we don't need this tail tags. I can tell 'em apart. And the other brother's like, no, you can't. He said, well, let's go rope 'em. Say it was Bill that had pulled the tail tags off, he'd go there and would rope one, and then Bill would heal, and then Tom get off and go down and have a look. And before he got there, bill would tell him the tattoo number and they only wrote three or four out of these things, and he got right

John Saint Ryan ([01:34:52](#)):

Every time.

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:52](#)):

He is like, okay, I believe you. But the thing about that you think about, I think there was 50 of them, 50 Angus cows, they're all black, they're all the same size and they're all the same shape. They all look the same. And it's just that level of being present that is very gal lama. You know what I mean? Yeah.

John Saint Ryan ([01:35:15](#)):

In his observations, he saw differences in everything so he could see the differences and just like you said there, it means I'm the same. We once went to get some calves for the ranch and we went down to the Loop ranch and talking to the ranch manager, and he's running these through and he says, which ones do you want? I said, I don't know, around 3 50, 400 weight. And my wife's there and she's, can we have a brown one and a white one? And that black and white one, I can't tell these parts.

Warwick Schiller ([01:35:50](#)):

I want 'em all different colors so I can tell the

John Saint Ryan ([01:35:52](#)):

Apart. Yeah, but see, he told me, but he'd see differences might, that year is a little smaller than that one. So I remember that number. He had an amazing memory, just a memory of things, the details. I'm working on a thing right now that it sent me as crazy as this. You're probably the first one to know this now, but 20 years ago when I was up there with Tom and I was doing a lot of recording for him for the video, I said to him, I want to sit down with you, Tom, just in the living room, just put the mic on you and the camera. I want to talk to you about your life and your family and just a bio because it's amazing and I know there's a lot of information in there that I don't know about and it'll help me understand more about you.

([01:36:47](#)):

So last week, me and my son's musician, and he also does recording and so on, and I said, you got to help me with this. I've got these tapes, and I hope to heck they're not destroyed because they were on old camcorder tapes. So we're just starting digitizing all these. But it's fabulous because I'm listening to Tom talking, telling me stories about his parents, his grandparents and all that, but the memory on his work, his memory, just all the thin air talking about when he worked in a bank and things like that. You think he worked in a bank. It's like it's things like that just out the blue. Just astonishing memory really.

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:34](#)):

People I've talked to said the other brother Fred had the best memory of all of them.

John Saint Ryan ([01:37:37](#)):

Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:39](#)):

I've heard that. Okay.

John Saint Ryan ([01:37:42](#)):

Tell I probably agree. He only to deflect

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:47](#)):

Another question for you, so I'm going to let you answer this one, but the other question you chose was what advice would you give someone who are about to enter your occupation and these questions? I stole them from Tim Ferriss's Tribe of Mentors book. And in that book, because he interviewed such interesting people, there's a little caveat that says, this one may be difficult, as many of us has occupations that are far from normal. And if you're going to talk about an occupation, you're going to talk about stunt man. Are you going to talk about actor, horse trainer, martial artist? And you said your son's a musician, but I've seen you on Facebook and you seem to be a bit of a musician too.

John Saint Ryan ([01:38:25](#)):

Yeah, it's just the thing that I try to get across to anybody. When we had the ranch, we used to have interns to work because they wanted to learn more about what I was doing and obviously more about Tom's way of doing things and so on. So we'd have interns coming in and I always gave them that. There were different ones, young guys, young gals who had aspirations to do something in with horses. And I would just try and encourage them because I would think about what my parents did for me. I mean, I literally left quit school at 14, so my academic life was not very good. I just made up by reading a lot of books I just loved to read. That was the only thing I liked in school. English lit music, and that was it. So trying to get it across the interns and people I work with, young people, just do your best.

([01:39:33](#)):

Choose something you want to try and try. Don't ever say, I don't think I can do this. I'm not good enough, or I'll never be good enough, or something like that because, and I tell him a story about this was from a similar kind of book that you read where you've got somebody going into more depth about the psychology of things. And he was saying that one of the worst things in the world for him was when he was researching stuff for his book. He went into the old people's homes, people in their eighties and later and so on. And he'd sit with him and it'd say, is there anything that in your life, what you've really liked? And they'd say, yes, I would like to do this, or whatever, and just asking general questions. And then he would ask this one question said, is there anything that you wish you'd done?

([01:40:36](#)):

Oh yeah. And he said, the number of people, a number of these residents would say, I wished I'd tried this. I just wished I could have tried it, but I didn't and I wished I wanted to do this all my life and I never did. And he said, that's the heartbreaking thing. And so I'd tell the interns this story, I said, be brave. Just try. Just get out there and try and what's the worst that can happen? It didn't work out. There's nothing worse than not trying, because that's when you look back when you're in the old folks home and you think, ah, I would've liked to had a go at that. Whereas if you have a go at it and you don't work out too good, but the effort you need to put in, that's where it starts. That's the kernel. That's the growth, that's the seed.

[\(01:41:28\)](#):

And then you just water it and try and grow. So whether it was like with being a musician, I've come full circle. I started off as a musician when I was about 16 and first job, not job. First gig I got was in a musical South Pacific, and I thought, great, that's what I want to do. But something else got in the way and the martial arts took over, so I kind of drifted away from that. Then when I was 19, I went like, I've got to get in a band. So I formed a band and we did some stuff, and that did all right for a year or so, but then something else, the martial arts was still there that was doing it, and so it went on so gradually there are things in my life that I try and I want to come back to that's important to me. And the music's really important because I just love music. Music to me is a way of reaching people apart from making myself feel better when I can play and just create something, sing or whatever, it's lovely when you can perform to people sometimes, and they appreciate it. They enjoy it. It reaches them. I don't need them to be tapping the foot. I just want to see if I can reach 'em with a song.

[\(01:42:41\)](#):

So try don't give up. Don't not try, do something. Damn it.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:42:50\)](#):

What does Yoda say? There is no, try only do. You could probably do a pretty good Yoda too can, he's not going to try the Yoda. He just looked at me like, no,

John Saint Ryan [\(01:43:02\)](#):

I can't even think of that. I can't even think, what's the Yoda sound like? It's Long Star Wars. The only one I watched the first one, and that was God, that was about 30 years ago.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:43:10\)](#):

I don't even know if Yoda was in Star Wars. Was he?

John Saint Ryan [\(01:43:12\)](#):

Was he? I don't know. Was he not? Is in Sesame Street.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:43:20\)](#):

Another of the questions is that you chose, do you have any regrets that you'd be willing to share with the world? And you said, I used to regret turning down the opportunity to be Sean Connery's regular stunt doubles. It would've been much more financially secure life for my family, but if I'd done that, I wouldn't have met Tom. So you had the opportunity to be the regular stunt double. I mean, you look a lot like him now. Did you look like him back then?

John Saint Ryan [\(01:43:44\)](#):

Yeah, yeah. It was a great deal. It was just the way things worked out. I had come back from doing Medicine Man, and then I'd got another job for Canon. This was before things fell apart there. They filed chapter 13 at one point. Anyway, and I was doing a movie and I was playing the main villain. It was great. I was playing a cyborg and it was basically a ripoff of a Arnold's Terminator deal. So I was thinking, great, I'm on the way, and this is the big bad guy in a feature film. And they called me and they said, why don't you do Double Sean again in Rising Sun? And I said, can't do it. What do you mean you can't do it?

I said, I'm going to do this movie. I think I was scheduled to do a movie with Chuck Norris, funnily enough.

[\(01:44:43\)](#):

And so I turned it down. And in thinking about it, yeah, it would've been an easy way to make money and live, because I wouldn't say easy. It doesn't mean to say that's kind of deprecating. Something works. It's not easy. Takes a lot of thought. But yeah, it would've been financially better and more secure. But I've got to look at that and say, dang, things didn't go well with Canon. Unfortunately, they filed chapter 13, which left me high and dry, but I met Tom and just once I'd met Tom and started following that, that's a life, that's a lifestyle. I wouldn't say a lifestyle. Trying to learn more about his way, and I'm still searching, still looking at it. That's why I'm so excited about digging all this footage out that I'd forgotten I had and thinking, well, this is really wonderful to hear him again. And after 20 years, it's great.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:45:51\)](#):

I bet it was interesting watching it again. You're like, oh, I forgot he said that sort of thing. Yeah,

John Saint Ryan [\(01:45:56\)](#):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:45:57\)](#):

I do that with these podcasts because when I'm doing this podcast, I'm in the conversation. I'm not thinking about, there's something that somebody said 10 seconds ago sort of thing. And so by the end of the podcast, I might remember some stuff, but I really don't remember the conversation kind of in the conversation. So I'll listen to 'em after they get published. I'll listen to like, oh, I remember when he said that. That was so cool.

John Saint Ryan [\(01:46:24\)](#):

Yeah, little things that come out of it and you think, wow, that's a blinder. That one I should make a note of that. It's like when I put these things up on basic where I just put a little picture of Tom and a quote that he said, that was something that used to strike me with Ray on a clinic. Ray would let a stream of these wonderful sayings out all in one goal, whether it was make the right thing, he's the wrong thing, difficult, smallest chain, slice to stride, blah, blah, blah. And he'd just ream 'em all off. He'd say so many in the space of five minutes that you can't catch them. And I'd say every one of them is such a gem and sit down and talk about it with your mate. Think about it. And that's why I thought this is a good way of putting these things up. Just let people, they can read it and think about it and study it, not just a whole list of them. They're there one at a time.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:47:29\)](#):

Yeah. Good stuff. Okay. One last question that you had was what do you think it means to be a leader and a follower? What does leadership followership look like to you?

John Saint Ryan [\(01:47:43\)](#):

Yeah. I kind of put that in because, well, I said I've put my 10 cents into this when I was doing martial arts, mainly because you are sort of elevated being the teacher, the instructor, and so on and so forth. And there is a certain level of respect given simply because of your position and so on. But sometimes

some of the lads, they got like, oh, you're the best. You're this. And I'd show 'em things and they'd achieve things. I remember I was a wonderful guy, Mervin Carlisle. He won the heavyweight championship in the uk, and I coached him and told him from being just the first time he ever tried. So after years, he kept working through the system and fought and won this title. But Mervin had this thing where he really wanted, he was not a young man. Then when I say a young man, he was in his twenties and he had a couple of kids from my wife and that.

[\(01:49:02\)](#):

But he was looking to me as being something really special. And when I say special, I couldn't do anything wrong, whatever I said, and I said whatever I did. But I always tried to be right. He always tried to be good, but I didn't like the way it was going. And I remember saying to Marvin, I'm just like you. I'm just human, flesh and blood. I make mistakes. I don't do all the right things. I'm pretty good at this, but what do you do for a living? Whatever it was, I don't know, plumbing or something like that. And I said, that's pretty marvelous that you can do that. You asked me to fix something up like that. I can't fix that up. That's really excellent, just because I'm teaching you this and I like to think I'm a decent teacher and you appreciate it, but there's lots of people out there, they're really good. And the same thing with, so that's why I'd go to Tom and Ray said the same thing. Don't try and put him on a pedestal. He won't want it. I can't.

[\(01:50:14\)](#):

I'd say something, man, that's amazing to you, just showed me this. It's great. I said, or it'd say, this is so wonderful. We've got to share it out. Tell people well, and say, it might work for you, but it might not work for somebody else. And the thing is, there's other people doing this. There's other people been good. I may not have been around them, but I know they're out there and you're thinking, that's real humble. I thought you were just unbelievably amazing. And so does everybody else that I talked to. And he's real. He wasn't modest, genuine about that. No. Yeah, he knew it's probably the same worry. We do the best we can. We go out and we try and help people with the horses, but there's lots of people out there now who are really good and don't come and ask me for something and expect me to have this wonderful, great answer to everything.

[\(01:51:24\)](#):

I can help you approach a problem, but maybe somebody else can help you because it's more, I don't know, it's a different discipline. Even. I don't know all these different disciplines. I don't know where this is going there, or I'm the first to admit if it's a specialist thing, I'll help you with behavior. I'll help you with your approach to your horse. I'll help you find a way through because I think that's what the biggest thing I got from Tom. But if it's something where it's technically challenging, you got to have so many strides before you jump that fence or so on and so forth. Yeah, you got to go and talk to somebody who does this for a living or a vet. You think this horse is lame? Well, it looks lame to me, but I don't know what it is, mate. Right.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:52:08\)](#):

Yeah. It's funny with the clinics and stuff, people do tend to put you on a bit of a pedestal. But when I hear what people do for a living, like emergency room nurses or whatever, and it's like, oh my God, you're amazing. I couldn't survive in that sort of pressure thing. And the other thing too is, I mean, you've been, you think about famous, I've got my fingers up here in here, but when you are that famous person, I'm sure you still felt like you were the same fellow. And that's just someone's projection

[\(01:52:58\)](#):

Of you. And it's funny because I have quite a social media following or whatever, and I do clinics and people tend to think you are infallible or something or other. And I just came back from Maryland. I was doing some clinics there, and last Saturday, there were two horses in this clinic that I approached a certain way, and I lost sleep about it that night because I'm like, that was not cool for those horses. I thought that approach was going to be beneficial and it wasn't. And I came back the next day and said, now, this horse, I messed up yesterday. I thought this would work this way, but it didn't. So I'm going to do something totally different, which was much more beneficial. And I had people message me on social media and say, I'd never heard anybody say something like that. Why wouldn't, I mean, I'm not here to be right. I'm just trying to,

John Saint Ryan ([01:53:52](#)):

That's a big thing. That's a huge thing. It's great that you do that because that's what majority of people aren't going to do. They don't want to seem infallible. They don't want to seem,

Warwick Schiller ([01:54:03](#)):

I tell people I don't have the answers. I just have some experience that I draw from to come to my best guess at the time. And the horse will tell me if it's a good guess or not. And those two told me it wasn't a good guess. So the next day I guessed different and was lucky enough to guess kind of right, or at least less wrong than the first guess.

John Saint Ryan ([01:54:25](#)):

And again, it's probably, and then no harm done because it's how you presented and approach it. Even though you might not have been happy with the outcome and you rearranged it the next day, you didn't do any harm in the first time.

Warwick Schiller ([01:54:39](#)):

Funny, the person that messaged me about or said something about it on social media a couple of days ago, she said something like, so what do you think? What harm did you do the first day? I said, oh, I don't think I did any harm. I just don't think I helped the horse in the way I was trying to, I didn't have to dig myself out of a hole the next day or anything. It's just like that approach did not

John Saint Ryan ([01:55:04](#)):

Fit for that horse.

Warwick Schiller ([01:55:05](#)):

It didn't fit that particular horse, or there was two of them actually, and it didn't fit that particular horse, and it wasn't getting the change in the horse that I thought it would. And these two horses were quite shut down in their head sort of thing. And getting those horses to come out of their shell and communicate takes a bit of doing sometimes. And sometimes it's one approach and sometimes it's another approach. But I mean, the whole point with it was trying to get those horses to start to actually, I wasn't trying to teach the horses to do a particular movement maneuver or anything. I was trying to get 'em to start to feel like they have a voice and start to communicate. And I just made the wrong guess the first day. But it was only wrong because it didn't help. It wasn't wrong because it hurt them. And I always tell people, this is the Hippocratic Oath, the first do no harm. Absolutely. See,

John Saint Ryan ([01:56:11](#)):

One of the things that Tom, you'll appreciate this. I'd call him up because he was six hours away, and sometimes I'd just get in a quandary about some horse and I'd call him up and say, can you help me with this Tom, and relate what the difficulty was? And he'd tell me, well try this and do this and try that. And it might be on for 10 minutes talking about it. And then, thanks Tom, really appreciate that. Well, yeah, no problem, John. Just give it a try and then let me know. Give me a call back in a day or so and if it didn't work, we'll see if there's something else I can find that doesn't work.

Warwick Schiller ([01:56:56](#)):

You know what? That's really all it is, isn't it? Like, okay, that didn't work.

John Saint Ryan ([01:57:01](#)):

Yeah, okay. I mean, as long as, like you said there, you're not doing any harm. You're just trying to search through a way to help that horse come through. And that's the other thing that people keep missing. That whole idea of horses needing that help to be communicated with is more important than the movement as to her, because generally the movement, the flaw is because the horse is misunderstanding what we're trying to do. He's trying to do the best he can with this knowledge that he has of how he's being presented to him or her. So that approach that, like you say, it's just you try this and it's not fitting now, so let me try this after. And maybe the horse sleeps on it and comes back and says, I think I got a better idea today.

([01:57:55](#)):

You don't just give up because that didn't work, and you don't then cram it and make it happen, because that is valueless. And I've seen so much of that where I can make things happen. I can make this horse perform. I remember Ray, we had this thing years ago where we were talking about how you present things to a horse to get a job done. And sometimes he said, well, you do the best you can. You don't want to hurt him. You don't want to harm him, but you do the best you can. And if it's a job, then you better be taking that into consideration. If you want to keep your job, you'd be talking about working on a cattle or something. And like you said, if the cow boss tells you, you got to get across that river or whatever, well, you got to get across it, get those cattle back or something, but you've got to do it.

([01:58:56](#)):

But my golly, you better fix it up for that horse the next day and help him understand it. And that was coming from a vocational thing. That was his work. And that's what I try and put across to people myself. When I'm saying, look, you want this with your horse. You want to be able to do this, you want to be able to do that, that's fine, but it's not a job. It's not something that has to be done today. So take the time it takes to prepare the horse properly so he understands what you're asking him to do. And then you'll find it's not a big fuss, but when you come in with the idea and need to get this done before I leave, then you're just forcing things. And like Tommy used to say, it's a shortcut in the long run. Just take your time, develop it, develop the horse.

Warwick Schiller ([01:59:46](#)):

And very few people these days have a job to do, but sometimes you'll have, people will say, oh, but I want to take my, they might have problems with a show horse or something, and I'll say, well, just take him to the show and don't compete. And they're like, but I can't afford to do that. And they go, well, it costs you just as much to take him to have a bad experience as it does to take him and have a good



experience. You know what I mean? It's still eating the same amount of hay and the gas still costs the same, and they kind of look at you like, oh, never thought of it that way. Light

John Saint Ryan ([02:00:22](#)):

Bulb.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:23](#)):

You're going to spend the money anyway. Why don't you add a deposit instead of making a withdrawal?

John Saint Ryan ([02:00:29](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. That's a good way of looking at it. Out of deposit,

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:33](#)):

I had an old horseman from Kentucky one time, tell me, he said, your horse is just like a bank account. If you're all making lots of little deposits all the time, then every once in a while you can have a big splurge. But he says, if you're taking out a lot of stuff and not putting much stuff in, you go broke

John Saint Ryan ([02:00:51](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, you've got a big debit there.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:54](#)):

Okay, well it's been a couple of hours, so we better sign off here. But John, it's been such a pleasure having you on the podcast and hearing your stories. You're like, you had this amazing life that I'm sure we could talk for six hours about the whole thing.

John Saint Ryan ([02:01:08](#)):

Yeah. Thanks Warwick. It's been good, good fun. Good talking to you. It's a nice natural way of approaching things. Is this,

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:14](#)):

Hey, I appreciate you being on here. So how can people find out more about John St. Ryan?

John Saint Ryan ([02:01:20](#)):

I guess that good old website, john st r.com. It'll be there.

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:26](#)):

And you what on social media? Are you on social media?

John Saint Ryan ([02:01:30](#)):

Yeah, Facebook. Facebook. I dunno. I guess you put my name in and it takes you to a profile page, which I closed, but then it directs you to the other business page. You can only have some like 5,000 people on your profile and that. So it's very confusing to me and I just play with it. I try and make people happy and make have fun.

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:56](#)):

I tell you what, you post some funny cartoons and memes.

John Saint Ryan ([02:02:00](#)):

No, they're great. It is nice. I laugh about stuff and what I won't tolerate these arguing. It's like, don't come on me. Damn thing. It was funny. One last thing for before, there was a post I put on that, it was last week or the week before. And I thought it was funny because it was just an old pitch of a horse and buggy. And I made the comment something about, well, at least this damn thing will get me home when I've been in the pub too long. And I don't know, I don't get thousands of comments, but on this one I got like 200 comments in the first whatever day or something when I look back and I think, what the heck's this? And it was all people saying, oh, well we shouldn't have these. Think about all the damn road apples and think about the mess. We can't do this. We can't have horses anyway. Well we should have horses. It's cheaper than gas and so on. And all this bickering. And I'm thinking, ah. So I just deleted the whole thing. I don't want anything to do with it. So deft really is,

Warwick Schiller ([02:03:03](#)):

Yeah, there's some people who have not much better to do, but

John Saint Ryan ([02:03:09](#)):

Yeah, it's just sad. They like, man, have a laugh. Have a laugh.

Warwick Schiller ([02:03:13](#)):

Take it. There you

John Saint Ryan ([02:03:13](#)):

Go.

Warwick Schiller ([02:03:14](#)):

Final words from John St. Ryan. Have a laugh. So once again, have a thanks for joining me. It's been a pleasure having you on here. And an honor, actually, you guys at home, thanks so much for joining us on The Journey on podcast and we'll catch you on the next episode.

Speaker 1 ([02:03:29](#)):

Thanks for being a part of the Journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick has over 850 full length training videos on his online video library@videos.warwickschiller.com. Be sure to follow Warwick on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram to see his latest training advice and insights.