



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

*\*\*IMPORTANT: This podcast episode was transcribed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party service and so errors can occur throughout the following pages:*

- Recorded Mike: Welcome to The RESPECT Podcast. I'm your host, Mike Domitrz from mikespeaks.com, where we help organizations of all sizes, educational institutions and the US Military create a culture of respect, and respect is exactly what we discuss on this show, so let's get started.
- Mike: Welcome to this episode, yes, I'm your host Mike Domitrz. I'm excited to have our guest today, Alan Stein Jr., he is with alansteinjr.com, make sure you put the jr in there, the j-r, 'cause it is a very different website if you do not put the j-r in there. Thanks for joining us here today Alan.
- Alan: Oh, my pleasure Mike, thank you.
- Mike: So Alan, you're all about performance, and this show's all about respect. So let's dive in to how does respect play a role in performance. I should back up a little bit, 'cause you've done TEDx talks, you speak with organizations, sports teams, pro teams, you have a wide variety of experience, so let's start there.
- Mike: Can you give a little quick background on you.
- Alan: Yeah, absolutely. I've spent most of my career in basketball, primarily at the youth level, but was able to work with some really elite level youth, many of which are playing in the NBA now. And my number one job then was to improve their on-court performance, so I was working on their athleticism and so forth.
- Alan: About a year and a half ago, I decided to parley everything that I've learned from the game of basketball and from some of the world's best players and coaches, and take that over to the corporate sector to teach businesses and organizations how they can improve their performance. And there's a very very high rate of transfer, I mean, what it takes for a Kobey Bryant or LeBron James or Stephen Curry to be successful, is not that different from the fundamentals that it take guys like you and I to be successful as well.
- Alan: So I'm having a blast in this new space and I was really looking forward to this conversation because I believe respect is the foundation to which all of this is built, and look forward to volleying that back and forth with you.
- Mike: Well we're gonna dive right in there, 'cause that's what I do when I work with organizations, is help them build the foundation or culture of respect. So how do you feel it's vital and plays a role in performance?



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

- Alan: When I was working with basketball players, respect was something that was talked about all of the time and it was emphasized from a few different vantage points. One thing that I learned as a coach, you get what you emphasize. So if you want a culture of respect then certainly you need to be a respectful person and you need to give respect to those around you. But it goes deeper to that, going back to basketball players, first of all they have to have a respect for themselves. They have to respect their body, and take care of their body to make sure they are in great physical shape, they need to respect the game, they need to respect the process of what it takes to be a great player, which means not skipping steps and doing and mastering the basics and fundamentals.
- Alan: They need to respect their team-mates and their coaches of course, they need to respect the officials, respect is the thread that binds all of these different things together, and I don't think that it's any different in the corporate world. I'm a huge believer, and I love that you mentioned culture, I believe culture is what drives sustainable results and creating a culture of respect is imperative and for me, I've never liked the word employee. I'm a stickler for terminology and sometimes I feel like the word employee gives a connotation that someone is superior to someone else.
- Alan: So I always perform just using the word colleague, and if I was the CEO and there were 500 people "working for me", I would still want them to view me as a colleague, and I would treat them with the same respect that I would treat anyone in the organization, from the building service person all the way through the executive staff. Everyone should be treated with the same dignity and respect, and that needs to be, again, I know we keep using the word foundation, but everything else will crumble if you don't have that in place.
- Mike: I agree, and it's true in homes too, 'cause some people listening to our show, they're applying this to their family life. So how do you see it showing up in family life?
- Alan: So I'm amicably divorced and the reason I bring that up, first of all I realized that I'm in the minority of folks that are divorced, to be able to say that you're amicably divorced and get along really well with your ex, I'm finding that that's a rarity, so I'm very thankful for that.
- Alan: But the only reason that I can boast that is because we both immediately, despite our differences, said we're going to approach this divorce with respect. We have three children, we have twin sons that are eight, and a six year-old daughter and we both said look, despite the fact that our relationship's not what we thought it would be, the way that we respect each other is going to have a profound impact on how our children view the world, and how our children enter relationships. The way that I treat their mother, that's how my sons will eventually learn how to treat women. I'm modeling that for them. And



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

for my daughter, the way that I treat her mother is how she'll be expected to be treated by men.

- Alan: So to me, being respectful in all cases is really important and as I know that you know, you can disagree, you can have debate, you can have professional differences, but you can do so in a very respectful and tactful and appropriate way. This isn't about everybody holding hands and singing Kumbaya all of the time. It's okay to have differences, differences in beliefs and differences in opinion. Bu you can have those differences respectfully and that is one of the most important things that I want to model for my children.
- Mike: Love it, and that is exactly what we teach with parents, what are you role modeling. Even when it comes to, we teach, hey, would you want your child to have a choice before somebody kisses them? And they're like, of course, I don't want someone just kissing my child without ... Okay, but do you role model that? And parents like, what do you mean, ask my spouse before I kiss them? Well how else are they gonna learn?
- Mike: And why wouldn't you just do that because it's the right thing to do. But parents go, well that's not what most people do. Well tradition isn't necessarily healthy or respectful.
- Alan: That's a great way to separate those two and I agree completely. Modeling, especially when it comes to children, is what's most important. And respect comes into that ten-fold. I can talk about being respectful to my children, but if they see me disrespect a waiter or waitress, or a flight attendant, or anybody else, a cashier, that's gonna speak at a much higher volume than what I tell them to do. So it always comes back to modeling.
- Alan: But not just for children. The same is true in coaching, the same is true in leadership. I've always believed that time is our most precious resource and one of the ways that we show other people that we respect them is by being respectful of their time and valuing their time. So while things obviously pop up, I'm not gonna imply that I've never been late to anything, but I do my best to be prompt, if not early, to every engagement that I have because I think that's a sign of respect.
- Alan: Perfect example would be, someone in a leadership position telling everybody on the staff that they need to be on time for meetings, and then they themselves walk in three minutes late. I find that to be disrespectful behavior. Now it doesn't mean they're a disrespectful person, it just means in that example they exhibited disrespectful behavior. And I think respect undermines everything that we do in every aspect of our life.



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

Mike: Well let's back up there, 'cause I think you said something very important. It's also in the mindfulness level, which is, disrespectful behavior does not mean disrespectful person. Right, this is not, you made a bad choice therefore you are a bad person. This is, you're a good person who's failing to display respect, or to show respect or to give respect, and that is a different discussion, because as soon as people think, are you calling me not respectful?, now you got a battle, now you got friction going on, they're not opening to learning, or new possibilities.

Alan: Absolutely, and I love that you're able to separate behavior from the underlying character of a person, because we all we're flawed, we're all under construction, we're all works in progress, we're all going to make mistakes, and especially if you're going to have a respectful disagreement or a respectful confrontation with someone, I think it's important that you do separate those things. And for me, to be able to say, yeah Mike, you showing up to the meeting late today was disrespectful of your colleagues is different than me saying. Mike, you're disrespectful, or you don't have any respect for this organization, or you don't respect the person next to you. Especially if you've established the credibility that I know that you do, you just made a mistake, and it'd be no different than certainly I've said my share of boneheaded things in the past, that doesn't mean I'm a stupid person. I may have said something stupid or said something that I wish that I wouldn't have said the way that I said it, but we can't let that tear down everything.

Alan: However, I will say that when someone continually shows habits of disrespect, that now that does question some portions of their character. It's that old adage, the first time you do something, it's a mistake; the second time it's a decision. So if I'm constantly late to meetings, then I'm not valuing the time of my colleagues and that's something that needs to be addressed.

Mike: Yeah, and we talk about this, that the person who even if you don't like them, you still have to treat them with respect. That's the foundation of saying we're creating a culture of respect. It's one thing we teach organizations all the time, if they go, well that person ... like you gave an example there. I can say that says something about your character and I still have to respect you. It's not, and because that says about your character, now I don't have to respect you, which is what people will do.

Mike: And the irony is, to say that person is disrespectful, you just disrespected. You just blanketed their entire character, or they don't ... here's my one that I talk about a lot with organizations. They haven't earned my respect. Which means, well when did you earn their respect? You see the game that gets played here? Now we get to choose who we want to respect and who we don't wanna respect, versus I'm gonna respect you no matter what happens I'm gonna respect you as a fellow person. Now I may disagree with you, or not value



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

certain values you have or judgements you have, that's different than not respecting you as a person, or your intellect, or your contributions.

Alan: Absolutely, you stated that brilliantly. And that's coming from a place of humility that we're all on a level playing field. Just the fact that we're standing upright and we're breathing, we're human beings and we're worthy and deserving of respect of each other. And that has to be that foundation.

Alan: It's funny because in my talks I actually substitute the word respect for care. And say that you don't have to like the person next to you, but you choose whether or not you care about them because caring is an act of will, caring is a choice. And when organizations have folks that can care, or in your case, respect, I think in this case they're synonyms, if you can respect the person next to you even if they're not your BFF, that's how you build a really strong culture. Because you choose whether or not to respect someone else, you choose whether or not to care about them. You choose whether or not you're going to respect or care about the mission of the organization, so no, we're definitely speaking the same language.

Mike: Why Alan, I like this because I think there's some differences that are important to discuss, which is the care and respect. And the reason why we use respect in those situations. I could care about a relative who I think does not contribute well to conversations, therefore I will not respect their opinion, is what can happen. So, I love you but I can't stand what you say.

Mike: We all have family members that will say, I love that person, I can't stand what they say, and so right away there's a little bit of disrespect. So I can care and disrespect, people do it. I love you, but I discount this part, or I discount that. Which means, that's not truly caring.

Mike: So, I agree with you, full caring would be very close, but people tend to dice and play with those and say, well, I care but I don't value you because of this. Okay, well respect means you have to value me, do I add value in this world?

Mike: I think a great example is in the sport's world, we can go look at basketball back in the day, those who are old enough who are listening know that during Michael Jordan's run he had a key piece on his team, a key piece that people wondered how did they operate on the same court? How did this person have the patience to deal with this other person's off the court antics and seemed to be self-focused, and a lot of people when they hear this they know that we're referring to a great rebounder in Dennis Rodman.

Alan: I saw it coming.



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

- Mike: Yes right, and people have this perception that you had a troublemaker in Dennis Rodman, they wanted to label the whole person troublemaker, still to this day due to politics and other things, he still has this label at times. And Jordan was this amazing, almost they put him on a God pedestal of athletics, how did that operate.
- Mike: So how can you explain to people, and I'm fortunate in that I have read some of the stories on how Phil Jackson the coach dealt with that, but I'd love for you to share, for our listeners, how they made that work, 'cause there could have been easy disconnect of failure to respect there, and it never would have worked.
- Alan: Well, the best teams that I've ever been a part of, whether it's a basketball team, or a corporate organization, they recognize the fact that you build a team the same way that you'd build a puzzle, and that every piece is important, and that pieces are shaped differently and they look differently but you need them all to make the final puzzle, which means everybody has a different role, and of utmost important in any team or organization is respecting your teammates or your colleagues role, even when they're different from yours, even if they're "bigger or smaller" than yours, it doesn't matter.
- Alan: You have to respect the fact that this person brings something unique and helpful and beneficial to the team, and we have to respect that. And I think, again I'm not privy to any information but, I believe Michael Jordan had a respect for the role that Dennis Rodman played. He was an elite defender, one of the best rebounders the game has ever seen, he would hustle his butt off, and I think that made it a little easier for Jordan to tolerate some of the other antics that he probably didn't prefer, but since he had a respect for Rodman as a human being and a respect for him as a teammate, but most importantly respected his role and knew that in order for us, the Bulls, to be successful, this guy needs to fulfill his role to the best of his ability.
- Alan: And that absolutely deserves respect and with a basketball team especially, players ten to fifteen, the ones that don't see the court a whole lot for playing time during the games, it's so important for the coach and some of the "star players" to really show respect to those players, because they're integral to the success of the team, especially when it comes to practice.
- Alan: So I think it that case it comes down to respecting the fact that everybody has a role, and everyone's role is important regardless of what it is.
- Mike: There's recent research that was showing that on a team, like a basketball team of five, that if you have more than two true all-out stars, your odds of winning go down severely. And you're agreeing with this, I can see you're agreeing with me, so do you think that is a lack of respect that everybody starts to get "me"



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

focused, when it's all-stars versus role players, that everybody respects each others' roles, what do you think is the cause of that?

Alan: Well in elite level basketball I think that's very true, although I find it fascinating because in the NBA you've got 450 or some players and outside of maybe the top 25 guys, the LeBrons and the Durants and the Russell Westbrooks, outside of those guys, everybody else in the league is pretty much a role player. They have one or maybe two very specific skills that they do at an incredibly high level. So yes, I think if you were to try, and we've seen this in many cases, Golden State might be the only group that might be able to prove otherwise, but if you're taking two, three or four guys from that top 25 and putting them on the same team, I think it makes it challenging for any of them to not be the alpha male, and to accept a role that they consider less than what they're capable of.

Alan: I think that's where you run into problems, but you know we just saw it with Houston this last season. A lot of people didn't think Chris Paul and James Harden could play together, because they're both very ball-dominant players. They worked magic, they were wonderful because they both respected the fact that the other guy was an elite-level player and scorer and could take pressure off of them, and they viewed themselves then more as a two-headed monster instead of someone that had to do it by themselves.

Alan: But yes, I think if you start stockpiling three or four alpha males on the same team, it just gets harder for someone to accept what they consider a lesser role. But that's what I think Golden State has done so brilliantly, you know, you've got Durant and you've got Curry but Draymond Green and Klay Thompson, who are superstars in their one right, they accept ... and when I say lesser role, I don't mean that to the value they add to the team, I simply mean in the eyes of most fans-

Mike: Right, how many touches are they going to get, exactly. Right, so how does that play in the corporate world, how does that play in people respecting their roles, when you start to get together that rock star sales team, how do you keep them, right, because the sales team deals with the same thing, the corporate world retention's a major issue. And how do you keep a bunch of rock stars on the same team in the corporate world, respecting each others' roles.

Alan: Well, in corporate especially I find it in different departments, like I wanna make sure that the sales team has a huge respect for the folks that work behind the scenes, that customer-facing colleagues have just as much respect for the people that are building and maintaining the infrastructure behind. Lots of times that's the separation, it's like hey, I'm gonna bring sales and I'm gonna bring business to the company but then it's up to your team to support and to keep the client relations and make sure that things continue to work together. So I think the first step is making sure that everyone in the different departments



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

has a very high respect level for what the other person is doing. Because if any one of those groups were to falter, everybody suffers.

Alan: And then when it comes to sales, you have to have the confidence that a raising tide will raise all boats type of mentality, that I can still be an elite salesperson, but you're my colleague and I can still help and support you. When you're going after an account, I can play the assist person on that to help you land that account, because it's good for all of us. And you have to have that belief that the better our organization does, and the better our company does, that will come back to me in many ways. And it's not zero sum.

Alan: Same things with the best teams. The best basketball teams I were a part of, it didn't matter who scored the basket, it just mattered that we scored. Someone in our color jersey puts it in the basket, it's a win for all of us, don't worry about who does it.

Mike: So, in these situations, especially in the corporate world but same in sports, the one barrier that seems to step in here is jealousy. Is this idea of but I'm just as good, and I'm not getting the sales opportunities that they're getting, they're handing the hottest, biggest contracts to that person, not me, and I'm just as good. There's a comparison/jealousy that's taking place. How do you help people address that in a way that helps them shift their parameters, 'cause that's what we talk about with them, it's shifting that parameter from a comparison mode to a respect of, so what is it going to take for me to get that opportunity? And if that's truly a culture of respect, I'm gonna have that opportunity, I'm gonna have that chance.

Mike: How do you address that?

Alan: I believe that there's only two things in this world that any of us have 100% control over, 100% of the time, and that's our effort and our attitude. Certainly our attitude is our ability to show and receive respect, so we're talking about the same thing, but I would if I was a leader in that organization, I would promote a culture where everyone focuses on their effort and their attitude and their preparation and their execution. That it's not about the comparison game, that's a game that's played all of the time now especially on social media, but it's a dangerous game because it's one that no-one can win.

Alan: If you allowed outside metrics and barometers to determine your own value, you will always lose that game. Because it doesn't matter what we are talking about, whether we're talking about sales ... if I walk outside of my office right now, within 30 seconds I'll find someone with a bigger house, with a nicer car, with more money, who has more speaking engagements, who's done ... you'll always lose if that is your measurement of self-worth. So it needs to go back to



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

your own attitude and your own effort and fulfilling your role to the organization to the best of your ability.

- Alan: That takes practice and it takes emphasis and reinforcement from everybody in the organization because I do believe it's human nature that if you and I are sales colleagues and you keep landing the big accounts, there will be some inherent jealousy there which is why, if we foster the right type of culture, one, you'll land those accounts with graciousness, respect and humility, and you'll share the wealth. You'll let everyone know that, hey, I might have been the one that landed this big account, but I couldn't do this without everybody else in this organization that supports me, that I don't land any account by myself. This is something we all do together.
- Alan: And the same thing from a leadership standpoint. If someone was constantly saying, hey Alan, I know Mike landed that account but man, you've been really killing it for us and we appreciate all of the work that you've been doing, I think those type of steps in that type of culture can lessen that inherent jealousy.
- Mike: Well yeah and the key there is the person who lands the account, share how you did it. That's respect right. If I'm being closed and I'm not telling you how I did things, that means I don't trust you. That means this is now about us competing and even though I'm landing everything, I'm just as scared as you are, 'cause I'm about holding the secrets. So I don't really respect you, 'cause I think you'll betray me, so I won't give you this information because I think you'll slash right from under me and steal some of this business from me.
- Mike: That's what privacy, that idea of scarcity versus prosperity, and so that becomes a big piece of, if you're running an organization right now you have to ask yourself, do my top performers, do they run from a place of prosperity? Are they sharing with everyone exactly how they landed the last success? So that everybody can land that same kind of success.
- Alan: Absolutely, I love that. And that is the definition of a winning culture, and in some regards too, and I know we're just talking in hypotheticals, but maybe a qualified prospect comes across your plate, and it's an easy softball lob and you toss it over to me 'cause you know that I've been in a little bit of a slump and you let me close the deal. No different than, I've scored the last ten points and you're in a shooting slump, I'm gonna find you the easiest basket I can get you to get you going again. It does, it takes a tremendous amount of humility, and any time there's humility there also has to be that confidence what you just mentioned.
- Alan: That hey, I can tell everyone in the organization, shoot, I can post on social media how I just closed this deal, because I don't care if anybody else knows.



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

I'm confident in my ability to do what I did, and that is ultimately a very, very high sign of respect.

Mike: Yeah, it's like we're members of the National Speakers Association. And people ask me all the time, wait, Mike, you got to this convention with other speakers. Nobody's telling you how they actually built their business are they, because then you could cut the business out from under them. I'm like, it's exactly what they're doing, is sharing everything. Because they know what they did is their business and I'm not taking away from them by applying it to my topic or my business, even if we're in the same topic, I'm gonna do it differently. They're gonna do it differently, we don't need to be afraid of each other, we can actually grow from each other, and push the boundaries and just become that much better.

Mike: When you have a friend and you're both succeeding, it's like, alright, now here, now here, and it's a positive push, it's not a jealousy thing. It's a wow, you did that, I wanna figure out how to do that. And because I want to experience that opportunity to have that impact, the way you're having that impact. And that's really key, isn't it?

Alan: Absolutely, it's been one of the most refreshing things about entering this new landscape of being a professional speaker, is how willing and selfless and unselfish and caring and respectful so many of the other speakers are. I don't know why I was shocked, I had no reason to assume it'd be otherwise, but I just think it's been amazing how much people give back. That was one of my favorite parts about being in the coaching fraternity. Many of the old-school coaches, they would sit down with each other and exchange tips on recruiting, exchange plays, exchange ... even if they're gonna play that person twice that upcoming season, they know hey, they can go get this play if they scout us anyway, so why don't I just share it with them and let's talk about why we run it, and everybody gets better.

Alan: It takes tremendous confidence to take off your armor and share everything. For me, I'm 42 years old, I have the humility to know I didn't invent anything in the speaking industry, this is all stuff that I'm going to be learning from others, either interactions with folks like you, or reading a book, or attending an NSA conference. So if I'm learning it from someone else, it's not for mine to hold on to. I'll pass that down to someone else, and if in a few years someone reaches out to me that's just starting in the professional speaking business, and they'd love some tips or some advice, I'd be honored to give it to them, because other people did that for me.

Alan: So it's not really ours to hold onto, and again with our theme, I think that's showing respect not only to the person you're dealing with, but a respect to the industry, a respect to the profession and the craft of speaking that we should all be here to help each other because, at the end of the day, you're going out to



## THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Alan Stein Jr.

speak to make an impact, to help companies improve their culture and improve respect. Which will make this world a better place. So why would I not be rooting for you, why would I not want you out there doing your thing making this world a better place? 'Cause that's what I'm trying to do and I don't have that mentality that it's you vs me. Yeah, there might be some times where we, other speakers in the business, we're going up for the same gig and you lose out, but that's okay, there's some much business out there and it just simply means that you weren't a right fit. It would never come down to, I shared something with you, you put it in place, and now they want you instead of me.

Alan: The chances of that happening is almost zero.

Mike: Yeah, it's incredibly slim. That's correct.

Mike: What's a book that has had a massive impact on you, on your own journey?

Alan: Well from a basketball standpoint, I'm a Coach K fan, I'm a diehard Mike Krzyzewski Duke basketball fan and he's written several books, but one called Leading With The Heart, is one that I love. And he also wrote one called Gold Standard, and those were written for the business world but obviously through the lens of one of the best basketball coaches in history, so there's a lot of transfer and crossover there.

Alan: I don't know if you know Phil Jones, I know we run in similar circles, but Phil wrote a book called Exactly What To Say, which is not as much a book as it is kind of a guide or a handbook, on how powerful terminology is, and if you go back and look at the way that he chooses to phrase and position certain statements, it all comes from a position of being very respectful.

Alan: I met earlier with another friend of ours, Ian Altman, tremendous speaker, he has a book called Same Side Selling, which talks about not looking at you vs me when you're selling to someone, but you and me, and let's work together to solve a problem.

Mike: That's perfect, and we'll include those in the show notes for everyone listening. Alan, I wanna thank you for joining us, it's been wonderful.

Alan: Thank you so much, I enjoyed it as well.

Recorded Mike: Thank you for joining us for this episode of The RESPECT Podcast, which was sponsored by The Date Safe Project at [datesafeproject.org](http://datesafeproject.org). And remember, you can always find me at [mikespeaks.com](http://mikespeaks.com).