

Mike Domitrz: 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 Domitrz: And welcome to this episode. I'm so excited because this is a person that I've interviewed before. This is not our first time talking with each other. We've become friends from a truly childhood friend of both of ours, so let's get ready. And this is Dr. Alexandra Solomon, a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at Northwestern University outside Chicago ... Evanston, technically. A licensed clinical psychologist at the Family Institute at Northwestern University and the author of Loving Bravely, 20 Lessons of Self-Discovery to Help You Get The Love You Want, as well as a forthcoming book due out in February of 2020 called, Talking Sexy Back, Your Guide to Owning Your Sexuality in Healthy Relationships. She's a highly sought after teacher and speaker who advocates tirelessly for the transformative power of love. Thank you, [Alli 00:01:07], so much for joining us.

Alexandra: Thanks for having me on again. It's always so fun to talk to you.

Mike Domitrz: Well I love your work. We work in very much the same mission and message of healthy, respectful relationships, and specifically today we're going to talk about that in those longterm relationships, like marriage, as a therapist ... And you're able to work with couples and you teach college students about those relationships so they can be healthier when they get into those longterm relationships. So let's dive right into this.

Mike Domitrz: When we were talking in advance, I was saying, "Hey, what would you like to talk about this time" because we have talked before, and you brought up curiosity. So how does curiosity play a role when it comes to respect and relationships and sexual intimacy?

Alexandra: I love this idea of talking about the role of respect in a longterm relationship [inaudible 00:01:58] as relevant. I know in the dating world and when we're educating college students and teens about those sort of like early foundational skills, respect is incredibly foundational. But I love this idea of talking about respect in a longterm relationship.

Alexandra: One of the key elements of respect is that idea of curiosity, which I think is easy to foster early on, right? When you're just getting to know somebody, there's that really natural organic curiosity to get to know them better, to understand their story, where they're coming from, to play with the possibilities of where might this relationship go. And so there's a risk, I think, that the more we get to know each other, we've been around ... or you know, we've been around with each other for many, many years that that sense of curiosity can dwindle. And so, I love to support couples continuing to cultivate curiosity, to really embody this idea that we never fully know somebody else, that the other person always

remains somewhat a mystery, and there's always new discoveries that we can have of self, of the other, and then certainly of where we go together as a couple, right? Like what's possible for us next? And to be curious about that.

Mike Domitrz: What do you say to the person who's listening. "I mean, look, I've been married 20 years, 30 years, and we know what we need to know about each other. And this is more something that sounds like it'd be for a newly married person or a young couple. Why is this important in respecting our relationship for us to have curiosity?"

Alexandra: Well I think there's a number of reasons. I mean, one of the things that I know couples fear and experience is a sense of boredom. There can be a fear that we're going to get bored of each other. There's going to be a sense of nothing is novel anymore. And so, when couples really invest ... I think couples need to invest in discovering new stuff together. Or the other thing I love is couples going off in their own directions to have their own discoveries and then coming back to share, right? So one partner heads off ... You know, whatever that looks like to them, to their new favorite dance class.

Mike Domitrz: I was wondering what ... Because I can hear people saying, "Whoa, what do you mean they were going off in their own ways and exploring?"

Alexandra: Yeah, right.

Mike Domitrz: Are you suggesting swinging or sexually exploring? Which some people may say as long as that's consensual and respectful and agreed upon, that's their discussion. That's their choice. But I think a lot of people hear that. So you're saying it could be that, but it could just be somebody taking on a hobby, an interesting, exciting thing to add to their life, like dance, like something else.

Alexandra: Yep. Or just putting them in a different light. Like I know I love when I get to go with my husband to something that's really in his domain, whether that's going to a football game or going to a work event. I love to experience him in his domain where I see a different Todd than the Todd I see, you know, when we're side by side watching a TV show together or sitting at the table playing a game with our kids or having dinner on a Tuesday night for the 8 millionth time, right? So to see ... I love the chances that I get to have, and I love ... I want to remain committed to finding chances to see him in a different light, to see him in a different environment.

Mike Domitrz: I love that. And travel can be such a wonderful gift in providing that, too. Because sometimes ... like you and I have somewhat a public lifestyle, so that we speak publicly. We can be in the media answering questions. But a lot of people out there including our partners and spouses often do not have that. So it's easier for our spouse to watch us in our domain, but not necessarily easy for a lot of spouses out there to watch them in their professional domain.

Mike Domitrz: Since you might not be able to do that, where can you typically find joy? I know when I'm traveling with Karen, and I see Karen just in the joy of whatever we're experiencing, that's such a high. Like you're just seeing that person, you're like, "This is so awesome." And I know sometimes she feels the same way when she's seeing me in my professional domain or just in my fun domain, too.

Mike Domitrz: So what are some ways that you find people do that? Is travel one of them? You mentioned dance, but somehow exploring ... is there a way for ... Some people might be thinking out there right now going, "I don't even know what I would do. Like I don't even have an idea of where I'd go." Do you have help in them knowing where they can explore?

Alexandra: Right. So we're talking about 2 things, and I think we're kind of merging them together. One is the idea that one of the ways curiosity shows up is that each partner remains committed to their own individual development, however that looks, whatever ... Sort of going away from the relationship to a hobby, to a class, to whatever, and then coming back and reporting in.

Alexandra: And the other thing we're talking about is the couple together, taking themselves out of their routine and having these discoveries together. And I think that travel ... I mean, travel's a great one to kind of enter into a new space together and to discover it together, to be curious together, to wander, to get lost, to sort of watch how it all unfolds. That's really fun, and it, again, gives chances to be curious together to see each other in a different light, in a different setting, and to have that sense of play and novelty together. Those are really ... Travel's a big one, I think.

Mike Domitrz: Well thank you for clarifying the difference. Because you're right. There's 2 very different viewpoints there what we were discussing. What about the person who's listening going, "I have those interests. I want to travel. I want to explore. My partner does not want to do that so if I'm going to travel, it's going to be with friends. It's going to be with those ... But I'm going to come back to a partner who will not have done anything while I'm gone potentially, so one of us is only on this. How do I help them to engage? Or do I need to understand I'm going to be on this myself, and they're going to be in their own thing. I'm going to find a way to make this exciting even though they're not taking the journey."

Alexandra: Right. Well so maybe then another way that respect shows up is saying, "Okay, so travel isn't for us, the thing that we're going to do together. I respect this difference between us, that I think it's fun and novel and you think it's a pain in the ass, not worth it, blah blah blah." So then, what could we do? If it's not travel, what could we do? I think there's such respect that comes from asking the question, so what could we do? I really would love us to have a new experience of each other together. I would love us to find a way to play together in a way that we haven't for a while, in the way that we used to but don't anymore. If it's not travel, then what? What is possible? There's so much respect in just seeing and remembering that our partner is a separate locust of

consciousnesses. They're separate from us. For us, it may be traveling new places together. But for them, if it's not, okay, then what? Then what could we share together?

Mike Domitrz: I love the word, play. The word of being playful with each other. And I think that's one that people often forget as you've been married a long time. You know, you did exciting and tried new things in those early years, and that's because it's playful. That is the fun part about it. If you're trying new things that were painful or not fun, you wouldn't have thought that it was just because I was young, it was good. It was because, no, it was playful that made it good. You know, it was the excitement of it. So I love that you use that word playful. Why is the key to that have to do with respect? In what role does this journey of exploration, learning, and curiosity ... How does it tie in to respect?

Alexandra: I think it is about respecting the space between partners. Like I am not you; you are not me. And I think when couples in a longterm relationship get such powerful attachment to each other, to each other's scent, to each other's daily rhythms, to the family you've created together, the home you've created together. That attachment is so deep, and the line between self and other can get really muddy and blurry and it's easy to take each other for granted, to make assumptions. Like that just making assumptions. I assume that I already know what you're going to say, what you're already going to do. It requires a kind of like being proactive and being intentional to keep asking questions, to keep looking for what's different, and to resist the urge to say, "I already know what they're going to say. I already know what they're going to do."

Mike Domitrz: Yeah, I like that. And it rolls right into what my next question would be which is about the compassion side of this. Because you brought up there, we can make assumptions. We can assume what they're already going to say. And that can feel cold, right? When I've already got the story in my head of what you're going to say, I'm cutting you off. Whether doing it actually or doing it emotionally in my mind, going I know this was discussed, that means I've cut you off, because I'm not listening, because I have determined what you're already going to say. What is the role of compassion in a longterm relationship in respecting that relationship and keeping it fun and exciting along that path?

Alexandra: There needs to be a way of bringing up ... of saying, I feel like we're stuck, or I feel like we're having the same conversation again and again in a way that invites collaboration around it ...

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Alexandra: That invites collaboration around it instead of blame. I think it's easy to say like, "We're having the same conversation again and again because you are stuck." It's really different to say, "I feel like we're hitting a dead end here or I feel like we are just going around and around the same thing." And just put it in that we language which is compassionate, careful, respectful language is saying like, we

need to find a different way to have this conversation and that immediately puts a couple more on the same page. We're on the same team looking together at whatever the problem is. The problem is I ...And I think it's really hard to also own, I feel bored versus you're boring.

Mike Domitrz: Correct. Right. I wanna jump on that because sometimes you go to we, the partner's like, This isn't a we. You're the one who keeps bringing this up. I'm fine. This is not a we." And they offended when you say we, because we're like, it's your journey. And I always find it would it be even more powerful to say I'm clearly failing at communicating the struggle here because we do keep coming back to it, so somehow I'm failing this. What about when I say this shuts you down or you feel that it's repetitive or we don't need it because clearly I'm not communicating well here. Yeah. That puts it on me to say, teach me what would you need to hear so that we can communicate this correctly. But that is, that's an ego point. I have to be coming from a place of compassion, not you need to listen to me.

Alexandra: Right. Well, and it's so painful to feel like a disappointment and so if partner A is coming to partner B and saying, "I feel disengaged in our relationship, I feel bored in our relationship. I feel like our relation lacks vitality." It's so easy for partner B to hear that they ... To feel like a disappointment and so that becomes a total shutdown. So partner B has to breathe and resist the urge to slip into that story of I'm a disappointment is once, because that whole like blame, shame cycle is just like a go nowhere. It's really hard though. It's really hard for partner B to stay curious and say, "Okay, tell me more about how you feel disengaged. Tell me more about what's going on. Give me some data. Help me understand. And if it's a problem for you, it's a problem for me and I want to be with you in it. Even though part of me feels so defensive and even though part of me is really afraid that what you're saying is I'm a disappointment to you."

Mike Domitrz: I love it. I was just at an event with Shawn Stevenson this weekend and we were talking about when you have difficult conversations with people. And he had brought up, I believe it was Shawn who said it, who brought up what scale you're at of anger, disappointment or rage, if you're on a scale of zero to 10. If you're having this [inaudible 00:13:53] if you're a 10th, then probably you're gone. The relationship's over if you're anywhere near 10. But a lot of people wait til seven, which means it's dangerous. It's dangerous. And it's hard to even have the conversation because it's on a volatile situation. The mistake we make is not having the conversation between zero and three, when both people are on at zero to three.

Mike Domitrz: So would you agree that having these as early as possible allows you to have a healthier conversation? Because somebody's not already inflamed in a way coming to this in a defensive manner or an angry manner and it's more of a, "Hey, can we talk before I just don't want it to go ... I don't think we're going there, but I want to talk before we get there."

Alexandra: Right. What are we going to do to keep our relationship playful, curious, excited? What are we going to do about that? Yeah. I love that. I mean there's some data that couples wait an average of six years to seek couples therapy. That is brutal and I mean that is my lived experience for sure. When a couple comes in and I'm tracking the history of the presenting problem, it's not a problem that started last week. It's a problem that has been there in some form or another for years and years and years, so I mean, to me that always goes to the place of, how quickly we will hire coaches, consultants, ask for help on so many other things in our lives and how they're still an unfortunate amount of shame and stigma around asking for relationship input and advice and couples therapy works. Couples therapy is effective. It is effective to sit in a space with a neutral third party who is specifically trained to help you hear each other differently.

Mike Domitrz: Well, what I love is you talked about and for anybody who hasn't heard me interview before. I love a book, *Loving Bravely* and in the book you say, look, "I'm a marriage therapist and I use a marriage therapist." Which I think is so wonderful because I think people think, "Well, you'd be the last person to use a marriage therapists because you are a marriage therapist. You don't need one. Why would you be going into one if you were in a wonderful, loving, healthy relationship? Why are you doing that?" And I think that plays into this long-term relationship discussion and respect because I was guessing by the way we've talked in the past, that there's so much respect for your relationship. You don't want anybody getting close to those realms and so that therapy can help stay strong at each step along the way. But I don't want to speak for you obviously. So how do you answer that when somebody is like, "Why? Why are you doing that? Why should I do that? I have a wonderful healthy relationship. Why should I go to a marriage therapist?"

Alexandra: Right, right. Because having a wonderful, healthy relationship and going to marriage therapy are not mutually exclusive. Marriage therapy, it can be a really powerful way of saying, "I love us so much that I want us to be as healthy as we can be. I want us." I mean sometimes for families that are in those active years of raising kids and managing careers and managing incentive family that hour a week is some sacred time to really bring intention to their relationship, to have conversations that are hard and that will go by the wayside. If you're in a house with kids, kids will always take up all the oxygen. That's the nature of being a kid. That's their job is to take up all the oxygen in the room and careers are more demanding than ever. And having these little devices in our homes, our work can always be intruding on that couple space.

Alexandra: And so there's something that's even at the level of symbolic of saying, "We love us so much that we take Thursday at 5:00 PM and we go sit with somebody who helps us listen to each other better and differently." And it helps us deal with the baggage. I mean the bottom line is we play out in our marriages, all of our stuff from childhood, all the ways in which the world has wounded us. We play it out in our marriage. I mean, marriage is a powerful, powerful container for

redoing, for bringing forth powerful emotions and so I get really confused when people are years into their marriage and they haven't ever asked for help and I'm like, "How did you do that?" We're about to celebrate 20 years of marriage and I can guarantee we would not be here had we not sought marital counseling on more than one occasion for sure.

Mike Domitrz: Well, in *Loving Bravely*, you help people address that baggage where it came from, how it's impacting me and before you're even in a relationship. So I know what I'm bringing to the table here or I can create a clearing off this table so it can be in a wonderful place. And so I think that's an important part. A lot of people forget is they go, "My marriage is wonderful." Well maybe you're not aware of some things going on in your partner's mind or you've packed some stuff so deep down you have never addressed. You've forgot about it. I'm amazed sometimes when I'm on stage and obviously I'm not a marriage therapist, but because I talk about respect and communication relationships, how often someone will come up to me afterwards and go, "Hey, that one thing you said, I'm in a loving relationship for 30 years. We don't do that."

Mike Domitrz: And just sitting in the room, I was like, oh my gosh, how have we never had that conversation? How have we not explored that with each other? That's messed up, but until something happens that makes you realize that, you don't think about it because your mind is so splattered with everything, like you said, from our cell phones to our kids, to our work. Give yourself the chance to realize there might be some things I'm unaware of. There's possibility here.

Alexandra: Yeah. I love that. I love that when one partner says, "I'm kind of struggling with us right now." It can start off like a little whisper, like they say a kind of quietly and it's easy to kind of poo poo it da da da and then they say it a little louder. And then they say it louder. And when I teach my marriage 101 class, it's just my college class that I've been teaching for years at Northwestern. I say to my students, if there's one thing you take away from this, it's the first time your spouse says, "I feel like we could use some help here." Go, go then. So go when it's a little whisper or a small request or a, "I think we're kind of off track here." Go then don't wait till it's like the whole wall comes crashing down.

Mike Domitrz: Yeah. What about the person who says, I know a lot of people that would hear that right there and say, we've never had that comment. Neither of us have ever looked at each other and said, "I feel we need help. So if we've never said that, we don't feel that, why bother talking to someone?"

Alexandra: It may be that things are okay until they aren't. And that until they aren't, maybe they're sitting in Mike's audience and one thing Mike says, kind of like opens this pathway. Okay. So now that pathway is open, what are you going to do about it or everything is fine and then you have a baby and having a baby awakens all this stuff around your own family of origin that you grew up in, whatever. So yeah, sometimes we do need that external thing, that keynote talk we went to of Mike's, that movie that started something in us having whatever

it is. Life throws us these curve balls that sometimes do shake things up and that's okay. I think sometimes where couples get stuck is they feel like, "No, we gotta shut this down and go back to the old way." Rather than being like, "Okay, that was the old way and now what are we going to do now, now that this doorway has been opened"

Mike Domitrz: Yeah. And you can ask yourself questions like, "Do we snap at each other?" And if somebody is sitting there going, "We've never snapped at each other." I would guess you would say as a therapist, that's really rare. That's just a natural part of being human. But talking to a therapist could help reveal why that's taking place and you become more aware of it so you don't snap, you don't just say, "Well, my partner's gonna stop doing what they do, but I'm going to be conscious of my choice of response versus reaction because of what the therapist is helping me see and my own history could be causing some of this to how I react versus respond." I just look at it like using a trainer. It's constantly, if I care deeply about my relationship and say I deeply respect it, why wouldn't I work on it? I don't say because my body's healthy. I'm going to stop working on it no, I'm going to keep working on it because it needs that to continue to get stronger and more vibrant. Especially the older you get, it takes more effort.

Alexandra: Yeah.

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Mike Domitrz: ... especially the older you get. It takes more effort.

Alexandra: Yeah. Sometimes one of the things that can get in the way, is if I grew up in a family where based on the dynamics of my family, I was expected to paint a smile on my face at all times, and just be okay. Everything's okay. Dad's raging. No, no, I'm okay. Mom can't get out of bed, 'cause she is depressed. No, no, I'm okay. If that was my role in my family, it may take me a long time in my marriage to raise the alarm bells.

Alexandra: Sometimes it's like those, the who we were in our families, the roles we had to play, the roles that our families needed us to play when we were growing up ... sometimes that can make it ... we can be like drowning before it feels like it's okay to ask for help. Some of us, we just have different thresholds. Sometimes it can be a blessing. If your partner has a lower threshold, and they're like, "Honey, you're snapping, and I don't like it," but, in your mind, this is nothing, because as compared to the family you grew up in, this is nothing. Your partner has a different threshold. Okay. Honor that. Go with that.

Alexandra: Then, there's so much richness that can come from looking at, "Holy crap. I did grow up in a family where I was expected to paint a smile on my face. What was the cost of that? How does that affect me at work, in friendships? What else is possible for me, if I decide to question that, and heal that, and take a look at that?"

Mike Domitrz: Yeah. I've had people come up to me after the show in their 50s, and say, "Today was the first time I realized I have the right to say, 'Yes' or 'No,' without guilt." You think, "Wow, 30 years of marriage." It wasn't necessarily the way their partner treated them. It could've been historical, before they even met their partner they created that. They created that story line for their life. You're like, "Wow."

Mike Domitrz: I think that's the important thing to ask. We don't know what we don't know. We know the things we know we don't know, but that's a tiny percentage of the things we don't know we don't know. Why not explore? I love that. Where did you first learn the importance of respect in your own life?

Alexandra: Oh my gosh. I love that question. I know a really big turning point, for me, was starting to look at gender dynamics in college. Taking a women's studies class was, for me, like putting on a pair of glasses, and seeing the world in a really different way. Thinking about patterns ... thinking about race and gender, and socioeconomic status, and how relationships work. That was really what sparked my fascination with how relationships worked ... how power works, the roles we play, and that we get cast into, oftentimes against our will. I would say that that was really an awareness for me.

Alexandra: I think all my spiritual curiosity, all of the different spiritual courses and groups, and podcasts I listen to, that has taken me into a realm of thinking about just what it means to really see another person in all of their fullness. You know? To really honor, honor the full 3D otherness of people, which is the heart of respect.

Mike Domitrz: Yes. Right. To be able to acknowledge them as their being, not as my being. Right? I don't view them through who I am. I view them through who they are. Thank you for sharing that.

Mike Domitrz: You recommend two books, in addition ... obviously yours, would be, but in addition to yours. Mating in Captivity by Esther Perel, and Loving With the Brain in Mind by Mona Fishbane. Why those two?

Alexandra: Oh my gosh. Esther and Mona have been just two real heroes in my life, two really big role models for me. What I love about Esther Perel's book, Mating in Captivity, is it is a book that really gives permission to this idea that in the long-term relationship we need both security and novelty. We need both of those energies.

Alexandra: The energy of security, like, "I know you have my back, I can trust you. I can rely on you." We need the energy of novelty, and in fact, sexual connection and erotic connection are born of that place, that sense of playfulness, not knowing, and mystery. I think that book just does such a nice job making space for looking at the ... this weird paradox, where I need you to be totally reliable. And, I need sometimes feel on my toes and not quite comfortable with you. Love that book.

Alexandra: Then, Mona Fishbane's book, *Loving With the Brain in Mind*, is just a really smart book about how relationships work. It's just a really solid handbook on how to love and be loved.

Mike Domitrz: Very cool. If someone's listening going, "I would love to explore these possibilities with my partner. I'm afraid it's going to hurt him or her. I'm afraid it's going to hurt them for me to ask us to seek support through talking with someone. How do I bridge the conversation without hurting them?"

Alexandra: Yep. I think that can be one of the things that keeps people quiet, is that fear of hurting each other. One thing is just to name that. "Honey, I have something I want to talk to you about. I'm so afraid of hurting your feelings, and this isn't a you thing, it's an us thing. I love us. I value us. I want everything possible for us."

Alexandra: I think starting the conversation in that way, and then, maybe not starting ... I mean, there are so many ways to start this journey of learning more about what it takes to love and be loved. Maybe you start by reading a book together, or listening to a podcast together, or going to a workshop together, or going to a couples retreat together. There are some different ways to go in.

Alexandra: If therapy were not ... hopefully, at some point in our culture, therapy won't have stigma around it, but, if therapy feels like it's too scary, too pathologizing, start somewhere else. Start by listening to a podcast together, or a webinar together. You know?

Mike Domitrz: Yeah. Even, there can be, sometimes, documentaries, or even the right movie, a health movie ... not the stereotypical Hollywood romance, which is not healthy to watch ... can at least trigger a conversation, like "How did you see that?" Or, "When you were growing up ... "

Mike Domitrz: I know that when Karen and I have done trips or experience, whether it's with a friend running a weekend where we get to see them speak, or it's a self-development, there's such a different energy level between the two of us at the event, like at the end of the day, because you've been exploring. Even if you're wiped out emotionally, or 'cause your brain's been thinking so much, there's a connecting going on though, 'cause you're both going through that together. Even though they're separate journeys ... even though you're at the same event, you're having separate journeys, because my story line is different than her story line. Doing the journey together brings us this chemistry that happens, that you're both experiencing this at the same time.

Alexandra: I love that. I think that's so true. I think that's so true. Even in that conversation, "How did you experience that?" Versus, "How did I experience that?" That's a curious conversation right there.

Mike Domitrz: Yeah.

Alexandra: It requires us to not get stuck in this, "Well, my way was better than your way." Or, "This was the right way. That's the wrong way." We have to leave all of that off to the side. It's so boring. It's so destructive, but just to really be like, "Oh my gosh, isn't that wild? I can be married to you for this long, and we experienced that thing so differently," or, "I didn't even know that about you. I never knew that about you." Highlighting that is so positive.

Mike Domitrz: Yes. I love that. Saying, "This is so cool." Right?

Alexandra: Yeah.

Mike Domitrz: Making that a positive, that, "This is so cool. We're still learning. Then, what more can we do to keep learning?" I think the problem that people get into is they think, "Oh we have to schedule this now." "You want me to learn something new every day." No, okay, no. Maybe we do something once a month to start. Once a quarter we do a little trip or once every six months, but just so that we're doing something. Just so we have it on the calendar. It doesn't have to be feel like homework. You don't want it to feel like, like you said, "The stigma." We don't want to be operating in a stigma. We want to be in a joyous place.

Alexandra: One of the reasons why the work that you do is so important, is I think you are such an example of a modern masculinity. I think, sometimes what happens around, that there's this pressure on men, this idea that men can't ask for directions. Men have to have it all figured out. Just that idea of being a man who stays curious, who invests in self-development, who puts himself in situations where he can be a learner. You're a role model in that way, because you help men resist this urge to move into a place of that somehow equals weakness. To go work on self-development somehow equals weakness. Or, I'm doing it wrong. I've done it wrong. Or, I don't have it all figured out.

Alexandra: I think, especially, we, the way that our culture works, we have trapped men in this idea that they have to have it all figured out. That becomes a point of resistance. It becomes a real sticking point in marriages, oftentimes, when there's a male partner and a female partner especially.

Mike Domitrz: Well, I appreciate that. Thank you. To be fair, I was raised with all sisters ... Mom, dad, and sisters. I learned, I mean, who I am is a combination of them. Right? I'm the youngest. I grew up in a home where I was the combination of them, which I'm grateful for, absolutely. That's been true throughout my life, very strong, influential, wonderful, positive women in my life. That's something to be grateful for.

Mike Domitrz: I want to thank you so much for joining us, and sharing your brilliance today. As always, you're just fantastic in what you share with us, and the great insights, and the language you gave us to explore.

Alexandra: Thank you for having me on. I always love connecting with you.

Mike Domitrz: Well, thanks. For everyone listening, we'd love to have you join us on Facebook, and our discussion group. It's The Respect Podcast discussion group. You can find me at Mikespeaks.com, or on Instagram at MikeRespects. Until next time, we look forward to having you engage with us in the social media. Let us know what you're thinking.

Mike Domitrz: Thank you for joining us for this episode of The Respect Podcast, which was sponsored by The Date Safe Project at Datesafeproject.org. Remember, you can always find me at Mikespeaks.com

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