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Episode 59

“Important Safety Strategies for Authors”

Mike Michalowicz: Welcome back to the Don't Write That Book podcast, where you can learn how to write your bestseller and own your authorship. Follow along with us as we give you an insider's view of the book industry. Now, here are your hosts myself, Mike Michalowicz and AJ Harper.

Okay. So this may be the most important episode we've ever created to this point, maybe ever. And that's not hyperbole. We had, uh, the author event we do down at Don's place. And I had to build up to this presenter saying, this may be the most important presentation you ever hear. A little bit concerned that I actually said that. And then he presented. I'm like, this is the most important presentation we've ever had.

He nailed it. His name was Miles Taylor. We're going to tell you about that in a second. I want to welcome you to Don't Write That Book, the podcast. I'm joined in studio with my co-writer, friend, my cohost, AJ Harper. AJ, you said you had a story of the first podcast you were on.

AJ Harper: I just don't know if I've ever told you this. It's a little bit of a secret.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay.

AJ Harper: Okay. So you had me on a, the first podcast I ever did was you asked me to come on yours and I just found it. It's the GMAP podcast.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay.

AJ Harper: And it was with you, Chris Coran and Ron.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, that's way back in the day.

AJ Harper: It says episode 13.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: So y'all said I should come on, I guess, to talk about books. I don't know what I said. And I don't think I'd ever been on a podcast, and this is my first time. So just, it was scheduled and you were going to call me. Okay. So I was waiting for the call. Well here's the thing. I had a problem. I had an eye problem. So I was at the optometrist and it turns out that I had this big ulcer in my eye And my eye was as red like if you like pink eye.

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And just like gross like losing. Yeah, but then also I So get this so I need my glasses. I'm, very nearsighted. So I have to have my glasses. I couldn't wear contacts in either of my eyes for obvious reasons. Also, I needed new glasses, so I left the optometrist and I could not see. I could put on my glasses, but only for short periods of time.

Anyway, it was this whole thing. I, I, I'm now behind, I was behind at the optometrist. So now you're going to call me, but I'm at the Palisades mall with the optometrist. So I'm rushing to my car as best as I can see, but I've got one, an eye patch over one. Because my eye is weeping, I'm full of snot.

So now you're calling me, and then it's the middle of the day, and it's so bright that it's scalding. Are you? And I, my, my eyes, I'm just in the front seat trying to answer your questions, snot, pain, red eye, trying to block the sun with the visor, trying to duck down in the seat. So. And also talk to you.

Mike Michalowicz: That was, that was our best episode ever. I don't remember it.

AJ Harper: Come on! I'm sure you don't, but the whole time I was like, I can't believe this is happening to me. It's like some sitcom or something where you're, it just gets progressively, progressively worse. And I had to have someone drive me home because I couldn't actually see.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh my gosh. So we got some really interesting things going on, which maybe we can share at the end of the episode. regarding the furtherance of the universe of books we're doing in regards to a podcast and television, um, and an imprint. It had a lot going on. So 2025 could be a big year or it could be plane into the mountain kind of year.

AJ Harper: The best kind.

Mike Michalowicz: That's the best kind, right? Yeah. But let's get into the topic of today. I want to share the story of, of Miles Taylor. So he wrote a book called Blowback and blowback is about the Trump, um, administration during the first presidency and Miles Taylor effectively was a whistleblower.

So he was part of the Trump administration. And Whatever your political opinion is, I invite you to read this book. I invite you to read all opinions so you can render your own. So I read this book. I don't necessarily have the same political views necessarily as Miles Taylor, but I think he is a great patriot because he shared his truth, what he saw, what he experienced, and what he felt compelled to share publicly.

He decided to publish this book, not anonymously, but put his name to it, knowing the risk that there are individuals that would threaten his life. He's received, I want to say it's over 700 threats to his life. He's been attacked, his family's been threatened, um, and all these

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extraordinary things. And he's experienced all these things because he simply put out what his truth is, what he saw, he codified it.

I think that takes extraordinary courage. I think it's the most patriotic act you can take regardless of you agree or not agree for someone to put out what they're seeing. And Miles kindly came to our event at Don Miller's place. So we have this event. I've shared it many times on our show here.

It was 40 authors or so. This is an event I host because I want to network with other authors. Don. I shouldn't say a host. I facilitate Don is the host. And, uh, Miles comes to it and I say, Hey, Miles, can you share about your experience? And the, the takers with takeaways I want is how do you protect yourself?

And he said, absolutely. So the buildup to it was with other people presenting, it was amazing this last year. And I said, of all this stuff you've heard, the most important presentations coming, I really was doing a buildup to it. And at the very end, I was like, Oh my God, I hope I didn't overplay this hand.

And then Miles goes up. And he pulls out a pen from the group and he says, this may save my life. And he pulls off the tab and as a shank, he carries a shank with him. He's like, because people have attacked me. And he goes, if someone is about to take your life, he goes, you have milliseconds to save your life.

And now you have a choice, and he goes, I'm choosing to protect myself and my family, and he puts the cap back on and puts it in his pocket. He then goes on to explain that, uh, that is not detectable when you go through security at the airport.

AJ Harper: I can confirm this. Do you want to know why?

Mike Michalowicz: Why? How?

AJ Harper: Because Joy Farrow, who co-wrote *Street Smart Safety for Women*, who is one of, they are my alums, with Laura Frombach, who's a former police officer, gave me and everyone else at my, at one of my editing retreats, one of those pens.

Yes. So, I, I own one. I have not used it, thankfully, for the other purposes. But this is true. It's not detectable.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, wow. It's not detectable. And this was not, It was a Bic pen that he cut off. He's like, he goes, use the standard pen. It has to be hard plastic. They make ones that you can, that are designed like that.

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There's military grade. Fits in his pocket. And he goes, I carry this with me everywhere. And he goes, I pray to God, I will never ever need to even consider the use of this beyond knowing I have it available should I get attacked again.

AJ Harper: So, but he had a bunch of other tips. I mean, obviously, Oh,

Mike Michalowicz: Oh no, it wasn't.

AJ Harper: That was very dramatic.

Mike Michalowicz: What a grand open! These are speakers. These are pro speakers. No, I think it's great. I just, yeah. He went through a list of different things. Let me just set the stage of, of the risk that anyone that's in the public eye has is there is a community that will disagree with what you say. And some in this case vehemently, and attack. There are others. This is the strangest part that become uber fans and obsessed, like Taylor Swift needs, it's a shame, Taylor Swift needs like a thousand bodyguards and stuff because there's some people that love her so much they think they love her and she loves them.

Like weirdos. Do you know, I was reading George Washington's biography, do you know George Washington would host random strangers at his house almost daily? If you were passing GW's house, you could pop in for a night stay and he'd have supper with you. The president of our country say, yes, have sup together.

AJ Harper: Yeah, because there was no social media to fuel these delusions.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, so there's, there's delusional people, um, there is sometimes with large events, there is this mob mentality that can break out, uh, stampede, like they're just, there's things can happen. Um, you can get. Threats. There's a thing called doxing. Have you heard of doxing?

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: What's doxing? Because I don't really know the term.

AJ Harper: It's when a person reveals all your details about where you live, where you work, your full name, your phone number. Maybe they dox your family too.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. This stuff is very publicly available. So easy to extract with all the databases online, um, and so forth.

My own personal experience with, uh, the public is I have been very fortunate. I've never had an incident. Um, I know other authors. Miles is not alone. I don't want to say names because I

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want to say where people have got threats to their family and their home. And these are people that write business books.

Like it's innocuous. We're trying to help folks. I've been very blessed. Um, and I pray nothing ever happens, and I can't attribute it to just being lucky but 2025, my public exposure may go bigger, it's the only way it can be of service. But the tradeoff is, is there a risk to my family or me? The other thing is too, in the line of work I want to do.

I want to be very accessible. I believe in all entrepreneurs. I want to support everyone who's struggling. There are individuals that take it too far and say, you know, Mike, Mike's gonna, Mike's gonna do everything for me. I have had people saying, uh, someone's like, uh, I need help. You send me money now, like these weird demands to me and uh, that's the most odd things I've received.

AJ Harper: That's just phishing.

Mike Michalowicz: No, it's not like I'm a Nigerian prince. Like, I've read your books and so forth and I want you to invest in my business. Here's the money I expect. And just a little weird.

AJ Harper: Oh, well that's...

Mike Michalowicz: Minor, minor. Um, but I also want to be kind to it. There's a certain point where he's dropped the communication.

Sometimes it's just engaging with the person. That's the mistake. So sometimes just dropping the communication is, is the best. So let me share some of the tips.

AJ Harper: Yeah, I'm excited.

Mike Michalowicz: So when this book came out, Blowback, there was an instant response, engagement and threats. And it goes through this kind of exponential climb and then this slow, linear decline.

So today, the book is still popular, but it's, it's not in the relevant current space. When something, there's a proximity effect, I can't remember the behavioral term, but when something happens now, we put way more consideration to it than the future, uh, or the past. And so Miles said when the book came out, he thought someone happened, but.

Someone went quickly. So the first thing that happened was doxxing. All of a sudden people said, who's this scumbag? Who's this dirtbag? And then they start listing. Here's where he lives. Here's the name of his wife. This is where they live. This is where he works and so forth He went to a safe house immediately. They're accessible; he worked in the government.

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So he's accessible through the government and He says he, day, day two or three, he's locked in this physical, it's a physical place, remote. And he's getting a divorce at the time, too. So the, the, there was, it was so threatening and so scary that it was part of his divorce, like the stress that put on their life.

AJ Harper: Wow. That's really sad.

Mike Michalowicz: It's terrible. And he went into depression and so forth. Um, seeing the guy on the other side now, there is this pride of, of doing the right thing. And so it's wonderful to see the arc. He's in the safe house. And he says like day two or three, he's like, he just goes on the roof of this house or deck or whatever and just looks the, the, uh, sky takes a deep breath. He's like, Oh, this is so cool. And he takes a picture and posts it on Twitter and just says, taking in the night air.

AJ Harper: Oh no.

Mike Michalowicz: And then people geo-target his thing. And within hours, they say this is where he is. Let's get him. Is that in effing sane, AJ?

AJ Harper: Yeah, that is. You can't do anything. Well, so what did he say about

Mike Michalowicz: Alright, so one of the tools he said There's these tools out there, and you should search it. One he said was called Delete Me. There's others out there. And none is 100 percent effective. But there's all these common public records. Kind of like the old White pages, you know, from the old phone books, there is the equivalent online, but it has more than just your phone number has the address has all these different things.

So one thing is that he did was he went through these different tools and cleaned up all the stuff online. It doesn't make yourself inaccessible. It just makes it a little more difficult to access. So that's tip one tip two. He said, don't post any pictures. Um, and you can scrape the metadata data behind it, which is the geotargeting. You can scrape it off, but he goes, he just doesn't go on social media and post anything. He said, a subsequent picture, what people did is unbelievable is you can do an AI now. You take a picture and they looked at all of the different elements of the picture and geotargeted. It basically said, Oh, that building in the distance and so forth.

This is where he is. He's within a, you know, This three-block radius is where it's pictured. So you can just take a picture and post it in AI and say, determine likely where this location is. So he goes, he doesn't even post online pictures anymore. He shares a picture with a friend or something, maybe through Snapchat, but definitely nothing.

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AJ Harper: Could you just post it much, much later? A lot of celebrities do that.

Mike Michalowicz: That's exactly what I do. So I'm, I'm on a one month to two week buffer myself and it's part for security and honestly it's easier to manage social media that way. So I was, you're going to hear this recording about a month and a half after I was in Texas and then Orlando and um, Topeka, Kansas, where I did my speaking.

All those pictures are submitted. They're sitting in a queue and they're going to wait and then it's going to be after the effect. It is awkward where I walked into Topeka and someone's like, dude, you were in Australia yesterday morning.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. But then you just explain, oh no, that that's historical photos.

Um, so that's another thing he does. Um, he emphasized, and it's shocking how few people do this as enabled two what's it called? The, the authentication, the two factor, two party, two party,

AJ Harper: two factor, two factor,

Mike Michalowicz: two party. He goes. People will try hacking your account. I mean, people do anyway. And he goes, so he has two factor authentication throughout.

AJ Harper: For everything?

Mike Michalowicz: for everything.

There was more than just delete me. I don't recall all the things he referred to, but there was like three or four ways to scrub yourself. Here's another one. Your personal property. You, if you have a mortgage or something, you can sell your home to a, um, effectively an LLC

AJ Harper: Like a trust .

Mike Michalowicz: And then put it in a company's name. So you could have, you know, "Miles home" that I wouldn't, I probably wouldn't use the word Miles. He probably, you know, Miles away from everything or whatever he wants to put or, or

AJ Harper: FU stalkers?

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Mike Michalowicz: Eff you stalkers. Yeah. Right. Right. Right. Right. And now you, the risk is you got to rent from your trust. So you have to have a trust with an entity that of course you trust because they now have control over it.

But it's another way of kind of scraping and cleaning yourself up to, to become,

AJ Harper: but don't, if you own the trust, aren't you just renting from yourself?

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, no, but you, the, the trust, the LLC would be under someone else's name. So it's, it's more difficult. And if someone Googles your name, they don't find you, they have to know the name of your trust.

So you have some kind of archaic arcane or removed name. Definitely. Another thing, and this is, Miles pointed out too, but Tim Ferriss has a whole blog about celebritieship. You know what, just making a mental note here, I hope Adayla can put the link in.

AJ Harper: Yeah, Laura does all the show notes.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, so Laura, if you could put this one in.

Um, Tim Ferriss was in Mexico. And what Tim Ferriss does, and I do now the same, is when traveling internationally, is to use a fake name.

AJ Harper: You use a fake name?

Mike Michalowicz: International travel, yeah.

AJ Harper: What's it inspired by? Well, you aren't going to tell me right now.

Mike Michalowicz: I'm not going to tell you, but let's pretend it's George Wells.

And what I'll do is, the local, um, travel, for like, I take limousines or whatever, it's George Wells. When you, um, check into a hotel. It's difficult because you need, uh, identification stuff. So, but, um, Tim Ferris shares a story. He uses a fake name. Let's say he uses George Wells. He came down out of his hotel to go to his speaking engagement. And there's someone sitting there with a sign that says Tim Ferris. And he's waiting for a limo. And he goes, he turns around, walks back out. He calls the limo company and says, um, Hey, this is George Wells, George Wells waiting for my limo. He says, Oh, we'll be there in two minutes or five minutes, whatever it was.

He's like, okay.

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AJ Harper: Oh, dang.

Mike Michalowicz: Dang. Yeah. So. He, uh, I can't remember how he reported it, but basically they called the police. This guy took off.

AJ Harper: Oh no.

Mike Michalowicz: And, uh, then he gets in the car and goes to escape with George Wells. He was this close to something. Of course, we don't know what it is. Let's hopefully attribute to total confusion and the event sent a guy that runs away.

Um, but that may have saved his life.

AJ Harper: Oh!

Mike Michalowicz: That's something

AJ Harper: Scary.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Gotta be careful about oversharing. You know, I'm public about my wife's name. Everyone knows her name.

AJ Harper: Me too.

Mike Michalowicz: My children, everyone knows your wife's name. All those things can be triangulated to find you and you gotta be careful about it. It's a shame because in our industry, connection is king.

AJ Harper: Yeah, I was just thinking about, well, what should you even tell people where you're going to be at an event? But then you need to tell people where you're going to be in an event because you're using, you're doing it to promote your stuff.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, and the thing is, most people, most people are good.

AJ Harper: Yeah I believe that. Most people are good.

Mike Michalowicz: And in the authorship space, the likelihood of someone achieving that degree of celebrity ship, uh, you know. I ain't going to be ever a Tom Cruise or that degree of popularity or whatever. And, um, there, there's also a nice inherent anonymity of being an author is people don't really know your face as much.

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AJ Harper: Yeah. But, but I also think that if you have a subject matter like Blowback or I have students who are, I have quite a few students writing about, um, politics or things that are adjacent to politics, racism, the economy, stuff that's pretty controversial, really important change agent stuff that I'm proud to be helping them with, but they have genuine fear about how it will go for them once the book is out.

Mike Michalowicz: For sure.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Another hack from Miles was every phone you have a phone in your hand right now, I got my phone right here. There's a SIM card, which I don't know what that stands for, but basically it's the ID of your phone. They can be electronically duplicated. So someone can effectively steal your SIM, emulate it, and when I send you a text to AJ, they get the exact same text.

It runs in parallel. The two phones are clones in the computer's mind. So people can steal your SIM and then start controlling, they can know, they can determine exactly where you're located. It's the phone is all

AJ Harper: And all your conversations, everything.

Mike Michalowicz: They can respond on your behalf.

AJ Harper: So what does he do?

Mike Michalowicz: You can get a SIM pin and you can, if you have an app, even Apple.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Don't do it now. It'll mess with you, but I have a SIM pin on mine. So you can't, you, you can't restart a phone without saying what's the SIM code. And if it, if you don't get the SIM code, right, it, it actually erases. It burns out the SIM.

It's like a mission impossible. When, when the thing lights up in smoke, it doesn't physically do that.

AJ Harper: That might not be good for me because I can see me not remembering what the heck.

Mike Michalowicz: Cause you get three, three attempts. So Mike comes on and says first attempt of three, what's your SIM pin. So you got to have it.

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You got to have it down. I'm thinking about getting a tattoo of this under my armpit. There you go. Um, so there's a couple of things. Uh Miles has hired professional security. There's certain arenas you go into where you need it. When, when he was assaulted, he has a security guard and security guard took care of that situation.

He was just walking. This is recently after the book, maybe say a month after the book, he's in a, um, What's that place? Ikea. Yes. You make your furniture. He's in Ikea. He's in the apartment. I guess he wants to get something. He brings his security guard with him. Thank God. And someone looks and goes, I know who you are.

And the guy jumps at Miles, pushes him down, pings up his fist and security guard took care of the situation. We don't have to take it further than that. Um, and, and Miles was, was escorted out safely and taken back home. So you can hire a professional security. The interesting thing too, all hotels, every major hotel I've been to has, uh, private entrances and so forth.

Like, you'll be surprised how many secret passageways there are. So, there's discrete entrance and exit. There's common points where everyone, uh, We'll expect you to go. You can go in through different areas and just make sure it's facilitated. You go in nondescript vehicles to like, don't show up in a stretch limo, uh, walking into the front door, come in the catering van and go in through the kitchen.

Like that's literally a technique some of the authors I know use.

AJ Harper: I would also say that just, you know, you can use some techniques that women use.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, give me some.

AJ Harper: Well, I mean, you can always be escorted. So you might not have professional security, but if you're feeling nervous about somebody in the audience, when you're doing a speaking engagement or somebody at a book event, you can ask the hotel security, say, can you please escort me to my room and they will walk you up to the room.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, that's amazing.

AJ Harper: You know, I mean, I remember, I mean, we did, women do it on college campuses, at work, you know, just, you don't have to be walking alone, so you don't have to be a woman to do it. You can just say, I need, I need somebody to escort me to my room, please.

Mike Michalowicz: Self-defense. Miles has trained in it. He suggested it.

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You can devote your time to becoming an MMA master, or you can go through basic self-defense training, which I have. Interestingly, self-defense training often starts off with verbal judo. Like you got to know how to navigate a situation like that, but there's certain techniques and this is, you know, it almost sounds crazy.

We're talking about this, but it's important is if, if you are attacking me, The eyes the throat and the groin. Those are the weak spots So you go for it and you go for it with knockout punches. It's not like a little poke Yeah, no you go with you got one shot at this. I This is a true story too. There's a TEDx video about it.

I have a personal friend who was not a celebrity who was attacked with murderous intent and survived the situation because he hit the person in the throat with his form. He came up, hit the person in the throat with the form and was able to disable this person long enough that he escaped. Then he would run away.

Um, and that's another thing is like, you know, once you're in the fight, what I learned is disable and disengage, get out, get out. Right.

AJ Harper: .Do not be taken to the second location.

Mike Michalowicz: Exactly.

AJ Harper: Well, we're getting really dark. Well, but it's the reality. No, I know. But I just also feel that, um, It's important to talk about other types of safety issues with authors.

Mike Michalowicz: As opposed a physical alone.

AJ Harper: Yeah. Because I think we can get wrapped up into interpersonal relationships with people that can go South pretty quickly.

Mike Michalowicz: Give me a hypothetical or a real, a real example.

AJ Harper: Like if a person is really into you because of your book and you're just excited that they're a fan. And so you start talking to them and then they overblow with that.

They don't really, it. They think the relationship is more than what you think it is.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: Yeah, an example of that is, um, there's this kind of famous 15-year stalking of author Amanda Hodgkinson.

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Mike Michalowicz: Tell me.

AJ Harper: Well, she met this person at a writing retreat, and they exchanged some emails back and forth and I think they met in person a couple times and then it got completely out of hand where that person, I don't want to highlight their name because I don't want to give that person popularity.

Thought they were actually in a relationship. And so it was even though Amanda wasn't, actually giving had ceased contact, that person thought that Amanda was sending her messages through what she was wearing or what, what she said on a podcast or anything. I thought they were sort of secret coded messages and it got really, really out of hand.

And I actually Googled what is that called when you think you're, someone loves you and they don't. And it's called, uh, erotomatic. Delusional disorder, erotomatic,

Mike Michalowicz: as I know, do you suffer from EDD,

AJ Harper: but it's real. And it happens to celebrities a lot. And I think that with authors, I know I'm excited when somebody tells me, I love your book. I'm a huge fan. And so getting really just thinking about, well, what kind of access are you really giving people?

Mike Michalowicz: Correct. One thing I do is, by design, is I wanna acknowledge everybody. I don't wanna engage with everybody. So when someone,

AJ Harper: Oh, so acknowledge, not necessarily engage.

Mike Michalowicz: Engage. So if someone says, I love your book, I say, thank you so much, please know I'm wishing you a lifetime of permanent profitability. If there's other questions you have and so forth, here's our community that can support you. So there, if there's a song by Eminem, uh, where. He's Slim, you know, Slim Shady, his other, so he's Slim Shady. And this guy is writing Slim Shady saying, I'm your biggest fan. And the guy becomes delusional. Uh, it's a really interesting song.

Because he talks about it. I was like, I think you've, he responds saying, I think you have a problem that you're so engaged with me and so forth. So there's a really cool rap song about this concept. And it wasn't from that, but I follow this method of just acknowledge people, then disengage in further communication.

Until there's a trust relationship, I'm not gonna like blow people off. That's not who I am either, but trust your intuition here. You can get, um, uh, you can get a feel for the, the, the nature of someone with pretty good measurement. I'm not perfect. Here's another thing I do when I'm on stage. So I spoke at an event.

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I'm on stage. I'll reference my wife and like, I'll reference that just to show that I'm not putting out any signals. My wife came with me and I, this was, uh,

AJ Harper: That's for a different kind of safety.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, well, it happened. So I'm going to give you the story. So we're in Boston. My wife, our kids are out of the house now. Everyone's independent. One's actually still at the house, but he's independent. He's working. And, uh, Krista goes, uh, I'll go to events with you, but I'm going to cherry pick. So, I was recently in Topeka. For some reason, she picked up. She skipped it. No, she skipped it. She skipped it. Okay. She's like, I'm out and not because it was Topeka because I was in Topeka for less than 24 hours.

But then I went to Boston. And she's like, I'm in, if we can extend it two days, I said, Oh yeah, yeah, let's make a vacation out of it. So I keynoted on Thursday, took Friday off. We were there Saturday and went home. Speak on stage. There is someone in the audience that's like, kind of like, you know, Give him that, that look and stuff.

And, uh, I'm not that attuned to it cause I'm not, I'm just not interested, but I'm not that attuned to it, but I'm like, Oh yeah, there's just a couple of things. And afterwards they come running up and they, they have a question, which is not a question, you know, and just enough. And I say on stage, you know, my wife and I actually, my wife's traveling with me today.

We're going to go on, um, a little tour of Boston. After the event's over, my wife and I are about to go out to dinner. We come down. Well, this event is having a dinner event and I come down independent of my wife cause she's doing something. So I'll meet you in the lobby. And this group's like, Oh my God, are you coming to dinner with us?

And this one individual is like, are you coming? Cause you know, and just kind of stands.

AJ Harper: I wish you guys could see Mike's face, your impression of the person.

Mike Michalowicz: She was bearded like me. And then my wife came down and my wife just looks at me and she goes, who's that? She knows. I'm like, what do you mean? She's like, you should have seen this woman's face shift from how she was posturing.

And then when she saw me, how her face just shifted. And, uh, and then we held hands and walked off and had a great dinner. There's people that will find, build an affinity to you because you're an author because it is this, I call the z-list celebrity ship as no one knows me, but in the community, some people know me and they, there, there's this interesting instant affinity and who knows what's going on in her life circumstances, but they, they treat you like, oh my God.

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And, and, and they'll start posturing that way. And so, um, the technique is, I just)a avoid it be my wife. B) I'll mention her on stage and so forth and she's with me. It's the best defense from that circumstance.

AJ Harper: It's just weird.

Mike Michalowicz: It can be in some weird circumstances.

AJ Harper: You should just wear a giant pin, just a giant, remember, you know, no, those, remember those pins of your kids and the grandparents wear it and they're just like the size of a small pie.

That's a good idea. And just wear a giant pin with Krista's face on it.

Mike Michalowicz: Krista's face. I'm with, I'm with her and she's gonna kick everyone's ass. She's like, she will kill everyone starting with me. She'll jersey out on me first.

AJ Harper: Never, well, also she, she's quite gorgeous. So if I were a woman that was interested and I saw your wife, I'd be like, okay, she's beautiful.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. She's severely burned her foot. We had, uh, we called it Christmas and Thanksgiving. It was Christmas. Chris-giving or Thank miss or something. All of our kids came home this past weekend because we're not gonna be home for Christmas or Thanksgiving. Everyone. Yeah. They're going to their significant others and stuff.

So we, it was amazing. I actually, I got a text. On Friday, we did this. I got a text on Friday from someone saying, Hey, I got a business question like it's Christmas. Like who texts on Christmas? Like that's how into it. I was, um, she was taking, we made a prime rib, which was delicious and she took potatoes, boiling tomatoes, hit the sink and it spilled out.

It is second degree burns. Yeah, it was, it's tough. Um, Ooh, it was nasty.

AJ Harper: Oh no! Still gorgeous though.

Mike Michalowicz: Still gorgeous. I'm like, thank God I didn't touch that beautiful face of yours. Uh, okay. So anything else on security safety?

AJ Harper: No. I mean, I just, I guess I would say don't freak out too much, even though we just shared a bunch of weird stuff. I think just set up a bunch of guardrails, even if you don't think you need them, I think is the big takeaway. So that it's just in place. And then you don't have to think about it, but don't let it dissuade you from writing.

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Mike Michalowicz: That's what I'm afraid of.

AJ Harper: No, I, I, I think it's better to say, oh, here are some strategies instead of this nebulous unknown of what are the safety issues when I become an author. I see that with my students a lot, just really nervous to take a step. So get these things in place and that might make it easier to finish the book then and put it out. Okay. I've done all I can.

Mike Michalowicz: You know, what's interesting to me is if you look at the statistics for driving a vehicle, it is a really risky thing to do.

AJ Harper: I'm about to drive home. For an hour.

Mike Michalowicz: You're welcome. But people drive. And I think if you really look, if you dig in the numbers too much, you're People conclude the safest thing is never to drive, never to leave my home. The safest thing is to do nothing. But gosh, that is such a horrible life experience.

And so we have to take risks, but we can, we can squelch or, or, or reduce, reduce the potential for a problem. That's my thought. I think go, if you're called to be an author, go all in

AJ Harper: And take some of these strategies and implement them right away and then just set it and forget it.

Mike Michalowicz: Yep. Let's do a couple updates.

AJ Harper: Okay.

Mike Michalowicz: So I got a couple big news announcements, which is ironic with this episode. Uh, got a TV show.

AJ Harper: You actually have the TV show?

Mike Michalowicz: Yep. So, it's produced, uh, by a company that's produced Chopped. Are you familiar with Chopped?

AJ Harper: Yeah. Wait a minute. How many years have you had different pilots?

Mike Michalowicz: This is my fifth or sixth pilot.

AJ Harper: Congratulations, man.

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Mike Michalowicz: Isn't that crazy? So, got the hard yes on Friday of last week. Yeah. Is that crazy?

AJ Harper: What? Mike! Were you waiting to tell me until it could be on this thing?

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, because I want to see your reaction.

AJ Harper: That is so cool. I am so proud of you. Thank you. Talk about sticking with it.

Mike Michalowicz: Well, here's what's interesting.

Maybe this is law of attraction type stuff. It's about two years ago. I said, actually, you know what? I'm good. Not doing television. I've had always like opportunities and I've recorded stuff. I've done pilots. I've been on shows and I'm like, you know what? That, It's not, I think it's the best way to serve an audience that's not discovering the book to break out of that, but I said, maybe this is not for me and it all comes in.

AJ Harper: Amazing.

Mike Michalowicz: So a production company reached out to me, said two years ago when I finally said, no, don't worry about it. I said, we'd like to film a pilot with you. We film a pilot. They come back a year later, said, we'd like to do another pilot with you. We do another pilot. Cause of the first one they did with a cohost was me and a cohost.

Next one I said, let's just do you just solo. They then started shopping it. And there's a thing called fast channel. If you haven't heard of it, welcome to what's coming next. Streaming is the current standard. Prior to that, it was traditional distribution cable. Prior to that was antenna. So it used to be.

You watch television by going through channel two through 13 or whatever, right? And then cable came out and there's a thousand channels. Then they're streaming. You pick what you want with Netflix. The new thing is fast channel. What fast channel is, is the companies that make the, uh, televisions at your house.

This is an Acer I'm looking at, but Samsung, Vizio, Sony. Those companies said, Oh my gosh, why are we broadcasting Netflix? Why don't we make our own content? Because we own the device you turn on your television. They could determine what you see. There's a device. So all these companies are making the shift saying we're going to make our own content and get rid of Netflix.

Vizio was acquired by Walmart. Walmart says, we want to take down Netflix and we want to take down Amazon's Alexa. Cause Amazon figured out if I put a sound system everywhere, I

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can listen to everything you're talking about. I can do whatever I want and I have authority over you. So Walmart said, we got to beat Amazon by doing this.

So Amazon buys Vizio because Vizio has 30 million. Or 35, no, I'm sorry, 30 million, 300 million television devices in the U S alone. And they said, now we can put content out there. So Vizio is a fast channel. Next time you turn on your TV at home, watch the ad that comes up, whatever TV it is, that's content being produced now by the, the company within the next two to three years, the intention they have is to own the space.

I'm sure Netflix will respond. I hope it does respond with some alternative, but Vizio has acquired the rights to this show.

AJ Harper: Okay,

Mike Michalowicz: so there you go.

AJ Harper: When do you start filming?

Mike Michalowicz: February 7th.

AJ Harper: Oh, man.

Mike Michalowicz: It's a studio show, uh, first meeting is about three weeks from now, they're coming to Boonton. Thank God it's being filmed in this area.

I'm not going to share where it is for safety concerns, but it's being filmed in this area. Thank God. So, um, I don't have to drive all around. It's going to be a studio show. And the reasons the studio shows are easier to produce and just fits with We're trying to achieve. I cannot share the show's name.

It was not my choice. They bought the show name. I don't even know why they picked it, but my gosh, is it a compliment to what we're working on right now? Really? Oh, I'll tell you off here.

AJ Harper: That is so huge. I hope you take that in and really celebrate that.

Mike Michalowicz: I think I will. When is it done? It's a six episode buy and what happens at episode six is do we want to buy six more or twelve more or do we?

AJ Harper: You didn't get to this point. Never. Amazing.

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Mike Michalowicz: Amazing. So that's happening. In parallel to it, a large organization reached out and said we want to do a podcast the basically the Mike Michalowicz show. I'm like, what the what? So that happened last week.

AJ Harper: So as in, you know, a big podcast sponsor,

Mike Michalowicz: Produce it, pay for it. They're going to, they're going to, they said, uh, we want you on all of the other major shows. So we have ways to get you on smart lists and armchair expert and so forth. Oh, by the way, Drew Barrymore is potentially going to be an introduction, um, happening shortly. And I'm like, what, well, what these shows, what these organizations do is they go out to the influencer network that they're already supporting.

And now it becomes, they own these different brands. And so you get elevated throughout. So that came into play. And last week we started on John Briggs for,

AJ Harper: For your new imprint.

Mike Michalowicz: Called simplified, called simplified. And so it's an entrepreneurial imprint and we're looking, actively looking for authors who are looking for is authors who are writing a concept that that is extraordinarily simple, hence simplified, accessible, but also kind of gives a new paradigm or a new contrarian opinion on established approach.

Um, we're not looking for authors who have Tons of social media experience, uh, that are inter famous interweb internet famous. That's what the traditional folks are looking for. We're looking for people that are going to treat their book like a product that have a proven system that's been deployed, uh, maybe through coaching that they're teaching that they're also have extraordinary business acumen.

That's our goal. Hack, John Briggs knows how to grow a very large company very quickly. We want people that have a proven way to make a product or thing grow because they're gonna treat their book that way so we are actually looking for authors for simplified

AJ Harper: Awesome. Yeah, how will people contact?

Mike Michalowicz: I don't know. I got to figure that part out.

AJ Harper: Don't message him about it yet.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Don't mess. No, you can go to hello at dwtbpodcast.com and say, tell me about simplified Adayla behind the scenes. Uh, we'll make the introduction or she'll start the dialogue. You got to get through Adayla first. Uh, I get involved and then our team at, this is through Page Two.

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Uh, this is their first imprint, um, of this nature. They've done stuff like this, but it's the first one. Um, The biggest thing is I realized what wasn't happening with Penguin was they have this collective of amazing authors and there was no organized effort for them to work collaboratively. It was actually the reverse of that.

AJ Harper: The reverse. Pushed any, put up too many barriers for people to work. Correct. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: So this is the reverse of it. We're going to have our authors working in concert and expecting that of them. Those are all the updates I got.

AJ Harper: Those are awesome updates. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: So we'll see. So that's why 2025 could be Uh, next level flight or it could be crashing to the mountain and none of this stuff comes true because they haven't completed. Yeah, it's just lots of commitments.

AJ Harper: Yeah, well, we got to try.

Mike Michalowicz: Got to try.

AJ Harper: Got to try.

Mike Michalowicz: Anything else? You got wrapping it up.

AJ Harper: We're gonna wrap it up.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay. Uh, we have another episode. We're not gonna record today, but that other episode that we were talking about

AJ Harper: Well.

Mike Michalowicz: there for next week, right?

AJ Harper: Yeah, but there's a, where the next episode, though, will be an update about it.

Yeah. Our book a deeper dive because we had some detours and pivots and some cool things happen so we'll do a deeper dive into the new book the new book and Specifically, you know how a book starts to take shape once you're kind of deeper into writing season and yes Um the adjustments that we make and just a little more behind the scenes fly on the wall stuff

Mike Michalowicz: Hopefully you can reveal the title soon.

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I'm just waiting for Page Two simplified to you to authorize that. And then, and then we'll,

AJ Harper: Well, I would actually wait until there's a buy link.

Mike Michalowicz: That's better.

AJ Harper: That's what I say.

Mike Michalowicz: I like that. Uh, we want to invite you to get all the free materials for the show and join our email list. So you don't miss a single episode.

I'm talking to you, future binger. The website is dwtbpodcast.com. Also. If you have ideas for a future show, something you want us to talk about, something unexpected, something different like today's episode, we want to hear it. Or maybe you have a story you want us to share. We'd love to share it. Go to hello at DWTB podcast.

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