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Episode 77:

“The Power of Inclusivity”

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. We're live to tape. Live to tape. I never knew that when they, um, record something.

There's the thing called live to tape, which just simply means not edited to tape. I. So there's Live,

AJ Harper: Oh,

Mike Michalowicz: which is a live broadcast,

AJ Harper: Like a Saturday Night Live kind of situation.

Mike Michalowicz: Well then no, that's live.

AJ Harper: Or the news?

Mike Michalowicz: Live Saturday Night Live is a live broadcast, so there is no, the broadcast and the deliverable, deliverable of the content is basically at the same time. I'm sure there's a seven second delay for swears or something. But live to tape is where you record unedited and then you can produce it a year from now and say this is a live to tape performance.

AJ Harper: Okay.

Mike Michalowicz: And then you have edited. So we're, we're bas-- we're basically live to tape.

AJ Harper: Okay. I don't think I fully know the difference, but that's okay.

Mike Michalowicz: I don't know if I, I might be just pulling this out of nowhere. This is the, the Power of Inclusivity episode. (Yes.) And why don't you define it again for me exactly what inclusivity means for this episode.

AJ Harper: Thoughtfully considering different types of readers so that they feel welcome and included in your book.

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Mike Michalowicz: And you know, the anecdote I'm gonna bring up in a minute about this, but before I do it

AJ Harper: Yeah, I know what you're gonna say.

Mike Michalowicz: I know. You know exactly. It's a Sammy Hagar reference. Uh, I am joined in studio.

You're listening to Don't Write that book. And I'm joined the studio with AJ Harper, my writing partner. And, uh. Uh, just such an extraordinary talent. I've said this before, but I don't know if I said it recently. So one thing I wanted to highlight about you is the ability to present something in writing or even verbally with fewer words, and yet a more profound impact. So a more effective sentence in fewer words. That to me is a skill, an extraordinary skill.

AJ Harper: Skill is the operative word. It's not really talent. It just, it just comes from years of practice.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay.

AJ Harper: Yeah. But thank you.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. It, well, it's, it's noticeable. And that has extraordinary impact for the reader. They don't get lost in, there's less likeness for confusion,

AJ Harper: Did you say less likeliness? Less likeliness, less like likeliness.

Mike Michalowicz: How would you fix that sentence? There's less likeliness for confusion. It's less likely to be confusing ?

AJ Harper: con confu. Yeah. It's less likely to be confusing.

Mike Michalowicz: Thanks for fixing that.

AJ Harper: And we edit and scene less likeliness. Wait, that's not even what you said. All right, we're moving on. Yeah, moving on.

Mike Michalowicz: I have found in books, when I write, when we write, it's nice to have those words that are typical of my voice to maintain that voice. So we do stuff like that. We will do... We'll create words that are made up, but are representative of my voice

AJ Harper: Acknowledging that they're made up.

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Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: Which you can do. Yeah. Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Alright, so let's click, click,

AJ Harper: But let, let me say, oh, yeah. Yep. We didn't, we're doing as little intros. Yeah. Yeah. Um, you shared something with me before we came on the air that you can't discuss about a project you're working on.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: And it's, you said. So we'll see. It will be May. Maybe it'll work out. What will be will be,

Mike Michalowicz: yeah.

AJ Harper: I honestly can tell you that 10 years ago you would've never had that attitude.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: I remember when you started shift, you used to only really read business books.

Mike Michalowicz: I. Yeah.

AJ Harper: And you used to read a ton of them.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: But then you started moving into more personal growth and spirituality and just,

Mike Michalowicz: I'm reading roomy right now.

AJ Harper: I don't know, I just see the evolution of you and I really like it. Thanks that, you know, that's a healthy way to be.

Mike Michalowicz: You mentioned that before too. I appreciate it.

AJ Harper: Yeah, it's, I think it's fun in any friendship, partnership to know someone for a long time and to see--

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Mike Michalowicz: See that arc.

AJ Harper: The arc, yeah. It's really cool, but I think you're happier because of it.

Mike Michalowicz: Totally.

AJ Harper: It's not, and depend like you want it to work out, it would be great. You're jazzed.

Mike Michalowicz: There's less stakes. Yeah.

AJ Harper: But you're not gonna, you know, be devastated if it doesn't.

Mike Michalowicz: I may said this last time too, I'm just valuing time more and more than money

AJ Harper: Outcomes.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. And I know, I know I shared this on a past episode that a friend of mine said there was a day that time becomes irrevocably more valuable than money.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: And I don't, and I even said back then, I don't know if I'm a hundred percent there, but I'm more,

AJ Harper: It's approaching.

Mike Michalowicz: It's approaching. Uh, I really value the days. I really value the days, and so I don't want to spend any day wallowing in worry or concern or stress.

AJ Harper: Yeah. Or disappointment

Mike Michalowicz: or, yeah. Yeah, what's

AJ Harper: the, you know,

Mike Michalowicz: and maybe part of it's like, what do any of us have to prove? Like who am I trying to prove anything to?

AJ Harper: Mm-hmm.

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Mike Michalowicz: And so, um, this, that was the attorney and there's all this back and forth and stuff, and I'm like, you know what? If anyone's gonna worry. Uh, they can choose to.

AJ Harper: You pay them to do it. Yeah. Yeah. But I, but I like that. I think, I think you're happier because of it. You're less stressed.

Mike Michalowicz: Thank you. Alright, so inclusivity. I wanted to do my little anecdote. This was such a great insight from you and it caused a polarizing response.

AJ Harper: Mm-hmm.

Mike Michalowicz: So there's a line in, I wanna say it's in, Get Different. But maybe a different, maybe it was Clockwork that says, uh, it's basically about driving, listening to the radio. And I'm listening to, "I Can't Drive 55" by Sammy Hagar, and these lights come on behind me. It's getting pulled over. And then you said everyone won't respond the same way you were,

AJ Harper: but you were making, but let's give context. It's a joke. It's a joke. A total joke. Yeah. So you were making light of it. Yeah, so that's the context.

Mike Michalowicz: So I get pulled over and I, I can't remember the exact detail, but I say, you know, I pull out my license and give it to the cop kind of response. And you said not everyone responds that way.

AJ Harper: To the lights.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Lights could trigger massive fear for certain people. Mm-hmm. And I'm like, oh my God, I, I'm so ignorant of that. And you're like, we need to include that. And so we did.

AJ Harper: It was, and it was very benign. It was just an acknowledgement that your,

Mike Michalowicz: My response is not the necessarily the common or the only response.

AJ Harper: Right. Some people might have a negative reaction to seeing police lights behind them.

Mike Michalowicz: We had a response from a reader who's of color and said, thank you. And it was, oh my God, it gets me emotional. Such a nice. Email message acknowledging that she was acknowledged.

AJ Harper: Right. Because she, she felt welcome in your, in your world.

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Mike Michalowicz: Yep. I had another reader say, why is this necessary?

AJ Harper: And it's just, it is. Just so, I think that person actually told you, I'm done with you

Mike Michalowicz: and, and maybe I'm done with you.

AJ Harper: I remember that.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. And I'm like, great, I'm not for you. Um, and I definitely don't wanna be the guy who it's, who's not inclusive.

AJ Harper: But why wait, the, the, the thing is that response is. Um, it doesn't have anything to do with you.

Mike Michalowicz: No. No, of course not.

AJ Harper: No. It doesn't have anything to do with the reader. Like they, they, or that, sorry. That statement had nothing to do with that person. They were feeling it was very pol-- They were feeling it was political. That was their.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh yeah, sure.

AJ Harper: Their view. But the point is, for a per it, it's not anytime that something is more inclusive, we gain readership. Even if you learn, even if you lose a person who's mad at you because you acknowledged another human being.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, exactly. Why do you think it's getting a bad rap? It has now. It ha But it has,

AJ Harper: Oh, we're in a bad time right now. Yeah. Yeah. It just, it. People saying down with DEI, they, they don't, they don't even use the words. Two of the words are diversity and inclusion. (Yeah.) Diversity is a strength. It's not a bad thing. And inclusion is making people feel at home and making people feel welcome. Yeah. Also not a bad thing.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: None of this means that anybody isn't getting something.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

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AJ Harper: Right? Acknowledging a person who has a different experience than you only helps that person and does not harm you.

Mike Michalowicz: Hmm.

AJ Harper: So there's no reason to have, there's no reason for it to be a bad rap. It's not hurting anybody who is not, it's not directed to, it's not keeping it is it?

Mike Michalowicz: Is it fear response?

AJ Harper: Um, I don't know. I wish I understood more Yeah. About why people are so against it. But I wanted to, I'm very passionate about this and I really wanted to talk about it on this podcast because I don't wanna see this anti-DEI sentiment and actually more than sentiment, just, it's an assault on DEI.

Like to the point where businesses are scared, people are scared, and I don't want to see it with authors because. Again, all we're doing is acknowledging other people's experiences and if we are gonna follow what we follow on this podcast, which is we put the reader first, we serve the reader, then you have got to, it's not, we're not to be only one kind of reader.

Mike Michalowicz: Didn't--

AJ Harper: and I'm not just talk, we've been talking about DEI in terms of, uh, most people equate it with race, but it's not just race. You know, it's all different perspectives, getting outside of our own heads. Like you, when I see police lights, you're, you're not scared, but other people might be.

Mike Michalowicz: Mm-hmm.

AJ Harper: It's just acknowledging that sort of thing so that people feel seen. And that's what we're supposed to be doing as authors.

Mike Michalowicz: Mm-hmm.

AJ Harper: Especially when it's prescriptive nonfiction.

Mike Michalowicz: Mm-hmm.

AJ Harper: So that specific genre, we are delivering on a promise and trying to help them make a change. You have to build trust and have connection. If you are excluding people or pretending they don't exist and not acknowledging them, then you're not, you're not doing what you set out to do.

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Mike Michalowicz: Right.

AJ Harper: It's that simple

Mike Michalowicz: And yeah. They'll, they won't feel as they're part of your book and you'll miss out on a massive community that could be served by it.

AJ Harper: Yeah. I think also if you're talking about, say, people of color, I think they are used to being unacknowledged. I think they're used to adapting and having to live in a world that doesn't see them. But it's not just that, think about things like if you're asking a person to do an, to do something like you have a, an action step in a book or an exercise and that costs money or a lot of time, what about people who are of, don't have a lot of money, don't have anybody to babysit their kids, single parent can't go execute on this thing that you think really seems simple to you. Right?

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: What's wrong with acknowledging if you don't have a support system? Here's a modification for you. If you can't invest this much time because you have two freaking jobs, here's another way you could look at it. That person then thinks, oh, first of all, you see me. Secondly, now I can do this. Now you're gonna give them the change they need.

So again, this is not just about race.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: This is not just about people in my community, L-G-B-T-Q. It's not that. It's everyone who might not live the way you live and see the world the way you see it, and may not have the limitations Even in get different, we had to do that so much because you are natural, you're not anxious, you're not afraid to put yourself out there. You do stuff that I honestly am still shocked after all these years that you would do.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: But for a lot of people, anxiety is a real thing and putting themselves out there. And we acknowledged in the book, that's another form of inclusion.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah,

AJ Harper: It's, I see that the way I do this may not work exactly for you. Let's talk here. I see you. Let me, how can we modify that?

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Mike Michalowicz: There's this term, marginalized communities. (Yes.) Is that appropriate here, or is that, that itself is a form of us and them.

AJ Harper: No, I think we have to acknowledge some, some communities are marginalized.

Mike Michalowicz: Okay. So, so in the new book we're working on around personal finance, a marginalized community is people who have, uh, experienced generational poverty, for example.

AJ Harper: For sure.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: And that's of all races.

Mike Michalowicz: How do I be inclusive of that community, which is of all races when I don't have that personal experience myself.

AJ Harper: Well, first of all, acknowledging that you don't is number one.

Mike Michalowicz: Yes. That's the big one.

AJ Harper: Yeah. So consulting with some people who might have a greater understanding of generational poverty to make sure that tonally, you know, it's making sense.

You're not, that you're not, um. Saying things that might be construed offensive. There's nothing wrong with checking that. Yes, we have free speech. Yes, you can do whatever you want, but again, is your desire to help people make change?

Mike Michalowicz: Mm-hmm.

AJ Harper: Then care about them enough to say, I don't wanna get this wrong where I'm alienating anyone. I want everyone to feel welcome here. It's that simple. So then ask someone who has experienced generational poverty. Sometimes you can even go to the extent of getting a sensitivity reader, which is a person who has that personal life experience, who can then read your book through that context.

And say, okay, this is, this is not how we would say it. Or this is, uh, did you know that this is something we, we don't like people to say? How would you know?

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Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, yeah. You consulted me when, uh, George Floyd was murdered. Um, there was this outcry globally for people to make a statement. And for a period of time, I did not respond or I didn't say anything 'cause I didn't understand enough about the situation.

At a certain point, it's like, okay, now I kind of have better context. And you say consult with Suzanne Mariga. I dunno if you remember this, but Suzanne Mariga, she is, her parents are, uh, well her father think is Chinese and her mother is Black.

AJ Harper: Mm-hmm.

Mike Michalowicz: And she knows this community that I was speaking about, um, from a experiential standpoint. So I reached out to her and said, here's what I wanna say. And she said, oh, here's a few things you're not aware of. And made enhancements to it. And I was able to communicate very effectively.

AJ Harper: Yes.

Mike Michalowicz: So it's your point. Exactly,

AJ Harper: yes. And that doesn't mean it's not negative about you at all.

Mike Michalowicz: No, actually it is reverse. It shows curiosity!

AJ Harper: Concern and interest--

Mike Michalowicz: To do it,

AJ Harper: Right? Yeah. And have curiosity. Want, want to, um, want to care enough to see how, how you should be received and perceived. And in a book, it comes down to language, you know, and I've been guilty. Language evolves. You know, words when we're eighties kids. We say all sorts of sorts of words. We said all sorts of words we never should say today.

Mike Michalowicz: Totally.

AJ Harper: Oh my gosh. And we, I've even put them in books because I didn't, wasn't thinking about it.

Mike Michalowicz: So, I gotta thank you. A long time ago, 15 years ago, I would say a phrase and you're like, Mike, that's offensive. And I'm like,

AJ Harper: I know what you're gonna say.

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Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Well I'm not even gonna say it.

AJ Harper: You can say it.

Mike Michalowicz: No, I'm not.

AJ Harper: Okay.

Mike Michalowicz: Uh. 'cause I, because I don't say it.

AJ Harper: I said it to your face that it was offensive.

Mike Michalowicz: I'm so grateful for that moment. Because I was ignorant of it. That was something I grew up as a kid.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: And that was the comment. And you said, I'm like, oh my God. I'm like, never said it again.

AJ Harper: Aw. Never. I'm so glad to hear. I knew you weren't, weren't saying it around me, but Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: No, never said it again. And I'm like, oh, thank you for that. It was just,

AJ Harper: But I said it with kindness.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh my God. Yeah. Support You. Opened my eyes to something and I'm like, oh my God. That is so good. There's another thing, this is a total aside, just yesterday, um, I was talking with, um, Liz here at the office. And, uh, she said. We were talking about lists of, of um, new Year's resolutions.

AJ Harper: Mm-hmm.

Mike Michalowicz: And she says, one person made a resolution. I'm like, that's my new resolution. She goes, every time I stand up or move, like I grunt or groan, like I noticed, it's like this is a sign of aging.

Like you get up ah, all the time.

AJ Harper: I did it yesterday.

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Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, I do that. She goes like, my friend said I won't do that for a full year. And it actually held to it. And they're like a younger person. I'm like, my gosh, I do that. I'll get up. I'm like, ah. No more.

AJ Harper: Okay.

Mike Michalowicz: No more, I challenge you. No more grunts or groans, when getting up off the couch.

AJ Harper: Okay. We're not gonna be, we're not gonna age faster than we need to.

Mike Michalowicz: Total aside.

AJ Harper: Total aside,

Mike Michalowicz: yeah. So can inclusivity ever go so far? Can it be artificial or too intense and that you're trying to placate?

AJ Harper: Yeah, you have to be genuine in all things. You know? It doesn't take much that Sammy Hagar joke, we just made one little line. There's other things we'll do that people will never see. So for example, let's go back to that exercise, right? An action step.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: We will consider it privately. Right. "Okay. What if a person doesn't have the means to do this time and resources, whatever. How can we make it simpler?" and we'll just do it?"

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: Right. So we might not say it in the exercise, but we have deliberately simplified it so that a person. No matter how much money they have, could do it. You know, things like that. It's, you don't always have to state it, but you just also have, it's, a lot of it is just simple consideration.

But you know, you can go over the top with things where it seems like you're just pandering. It has to come from a. A place, a genuine place of caring. And it doesn't have to be complicated. The language is the big one to understand, okay, this is not a word that I should be using anymore, and don't get so crabby about it.

You know, it language isn't fixed, it's always evolving. So let it go. Just err on the side of I'm not gonna offend my freaking readers, you know? 'cause there isn't one. Type of reader

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Mike Michalowicz: except for human. We're all humans.

AJ Harper: Yeah. The only thing that binds your readers together is that they have a shared desire and a shared problem.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. That That is it. That's it. That's it. That's it. I hired Trudy LeBron. She's a DE--

AJ Harper: I know Trudy.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, do you?

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Amazing. And I told her, I said I noticed something when it comes to racism. The racism I have.

AJ Harper: And thank you for hiring her, by the way. Oh, you wanna explain what she does?

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. She's a DEI expert. Um, she helps individuals and businesses address a, a lack of diversity, a lack of inclusion, and brings it about, and I was doing a one-on-one call with her and I said, I realized we all have racial tendencies.

AJ Harper: Racist, you mean

Mike Michalowicz: Racist. Yeah. Uh, right, right. We all have racist. Thank you. We all have racist tendencies. I said I noticed because I travel a lot when I go to the airport, if I approach the agent desk and there is, for example, a Black agent and a white agent, I said, I just noticed subconsciously I'm leaning toward, I go to the white person first. Some, you know, whoever makes eye contact first, but if, if all things are equal, and I said, now realizing this.

I, I want to kind of correct this. I'm gonna go to the Black agent, but I said, that sounds racist. Like I'm picking someone based upon color. She says, no, no, you have to deprogram yourself.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Until she goes. So there is this period. She goes, there's gonna be this awkwardness that you're consciously doing something.

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AJ Harper: Mm-hmm.

Mike Michalowicz: To put yourself back into what I'm defining for myself, a corrective state where all man, all mankind, all humankind is created equal and to bring that equality back. She goes, you have to be deliberate about it, and it's gonna be awkward and crunchy and weird, but then you'll get to a subconscious equilibrium.

AJ Harper: I love that. So I think a lot of people don't understand that. It's not like you're switching

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: Permanently. You're deprogramming.

Mike Michalowicz: You're deprogramming.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. And I think we have to do it through our books or writing.

AJ Harper: And again, it's not, that doesn't have to be, it's, it's y'all. It's elegant and simple when you do it right, it's not. Anything that... It's not like a giant spotlight. All it does is make the people that you're attending to feel seen and respected and valued. It's not like there's a giant spotlight on your book that says DEI approved.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah.

AJ Harper: It's just that those, the people you are considering feel considered and that is beautiful.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah,

AJ Harper: That is beautiful. And we need to take time to do it. It's actually one of my editing passes in my must-read editing method. Diversity and Inclusiveness. And diversity is another piece, which is we default to our own network and we don't think, do I have enough stories that represent diversity of life.

Mike Michalowicz: Mm-hmm.

AJ Harper: Are all my stories about white people? Are, all my stories about men are all my stories about certain age bracket? Yeah. People of, um, a certain class, you know, or income

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bracket. We just ask your, and there's nothing to feel bad about. If the answer is yes, then just correct it. Say, okay, let me go find some people.

And you know, what's great about it? You are gonna find stuff that you didn't consider, and that's the point. Diversity is beautiful because we all have different perspectives. You can't possibly know what it's like for this person or that person, if you're just living in this one world. Mm. So why don't you wanna know about it?

Mike Michalowicz: You know, outside our home, our front door, we have one of those big standing signs that says, welcome on it. And I've seen this at other homes too, on the front porch. And a test I do occasionally is I'll look at that sign and I ask myself in this moment, the word before, welcome. Is it all welcome? Or some welcome?

AJ Harper: Hmm.

Mike Michalowicz: And I wonder, with our book, if we can put that little sign in front of it and say, when people read this, are they gonna see some welcome or all welcome?

AJ Harper: Yeah. This is just, it's um, you know, I think writing an inclusive book or writing, listen, just writing a must read. It's a series of thoughtful decisions.

It's a series of thoughtful decisions. And we need to come outside of ourselves and think about others. It will make your book better. And again, there's nothing. Whatever you did in the past, forgive yourself, move on. We all do what the best we can. Certainly there's stuff I've written for others that, oh, I wish I didn't use that word now that I know. Right. Or I wish I would've thought of that before. Oh, that's right. I didn't really get a diverse group of people. I didn't interview a diverse group of people. That's okay. Do better the next time. It's like that Maya Angelou quote. I think I put it in there.

Mike Michalowicz: You did. I'll let you read it.

AJ Harper: Maya Angelou said, do the best you can until you know better, and then when you know better, do better.

Mike Michalowicz: Oh, brilliant.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Brilliant. It's funny, I was watching some movies from the eighties. And some of it's like horrific. Oh gosh, it's horrific.

AJ Harper: Oh gosh.

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Mike Michalowicz: It's like, oh, that's. That's sexual abuse. That's rape.

AJ Harper: Like yeah, like 16 Candles. Like when... Yeah. One of my favorite movies. And now I, I wanted to show it to my son. A bunch of our movies like John Hughes movies and like, um, not that one,

Mike Michalowicz: Right?

AJ Harper: Oh, wait. Oh, not that one. Yeah. And we were watching them, and it was no one thought any, no one said a thing.

Mike Michalowicz: No, I didn't notice.

AJ Harper: Yeah. Racism. Sexism,

Mike Michalowicz: All of it.

AJ Harper: Bad stuff.

Mike Michalowicz: And that goes back to Maya's quote is when you know better.

AJ Harper: Yeah,

Mike Michalowicz: do better.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: Um, anything else on this topic?

AJ Harper: No, just y'all please. I really wanted to talk about this. Can we not shy away from this? This is nothing bad. This is not political, this is not, um, it's not political. It's just decency. Common sense. And common decency. That's what we're talking about.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Yeah. I hundred percent agree. I, yeah. Love one another, love one another, include one another. I see our life's path as a infinity symbol, and that we're all on the same infinity loop. We're just in different parts of the loop.

It wants just help each other along. Um, that's, that's it. That's it. Simple. And as an author, we have a coveted and cherished position, but also a responsibility to be proponents of this.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

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Mike Michalowicz: If we don't do it, who is?

AJ Harper: Yes, absolutely.

Mike Michalowicz: Alright, my friends, uh, next week we're gonna talk about understanding best seller lists.

AJ Harper: Yeah. We're going, we're gonna go there.

Mike Michalowicz: And the shiitake's going down like, like there is no longer the Wall Street. No.

AJ Harper: WSJ is gone.

Mike Michalowicz: Gone. New York Times is in question now because it's been manipulated so much.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: There's a USA Today that no one knows about. Like there's like a lot of stuff going down. Amazon has its own, it has its top 100 dynamics. We're gonna talk about all that stuff and uh, there's advantages to being on the bestseller list for sure, but there's also. Um, components that people put value in that made there's not value there. So you're gonna discover that in our next episode. I want you to sign up for AJ's retreats.

Um, listen, it's probably sold out, so you probably missed out already. We've done, well, we've done three episodes in one day.

AJ Harper: We're in, we're in the future. Yeah. 'cause this is several weeks out, so it's quite possible. It's, it's probably sold out. Thank you for keep mentioning you mentioning this, though. It warms my heart that you would keep mentioning it.

Mike Michalowicz: because this mofu is going to yours. I can't wait now, not the retreat. I'm coming to your place.

AJ Harper: Yeah, we do our own thing.

Mike Michalowicz: We moved it to June. I think

AJ Harper: I requested it because I think they're gonna be a little delayed with my property.

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Mike Michalowicz: And now you have me like a little bit geeking out 'cause I'm like, oh, the tech install we're gonna do.

AJ Harper: Yeah, a, I asked Mike to help me set up a little podcast area so I don't have to leave the island.

Mike Michalowicz: I'm gonna revisit. My tech days, I can't wait. We're gonna go off the charts. Cool. Not expensive.

AJ Harper: Okay,

Mike Michalowicz: Cool.

AJ Harper: I know, I know. I can ask you and I'm not gonna be getting some ridiculous numbers 'cause you're frugal like me.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah, yeah. No, we're gonna do it like, kinda like this room. We're gonna do it right. It's gonna sound amazing and it's gonna be on the dime. Um, but you can go out to the event at AJ's place and on Madeline Island if there's a slot available. But if not, next year is queing up already. Go to ajharper.com and darn it, if you don't have her book yet. I, and I noticed one person listening. He's like, I, yeah, I've heard a thousand times.

I haven't bought right on my street. Buy it. Write a must read.

AJ Harper: Wait, did someone actually say that?

Mike Michalowicz: No, I'm just acting.

AJ Harper: Oh. 'cause I was gonna feel then you need to stop.

Mike Michalowicz: That's so funny. I am such a good actor. You actually, you were immersed in that story there. Did someone really? No, that was me acting.

AJ Harper: Yeah.

Mike Michalowicz: "I've heard this so many times. I'm not gonna buy the book."

AJ Harper: Okay.

Mike Michalowicz: No, no one said that.

don't write *that* book!

AJ Harper: You don't have to.

Mike Michalowicz: No.

AJ Harper: Come on there. There are libraries, you know.

Mike Michalowicz: Yeah. Well get the book. Okay. Go to the library, get the book. You go there,

AJ Harper: check it out,

Mike Michalowicz: Get it. It will. It will be the most defining moment of your author career.

And I, I do not say that as hyperbole. It is that good. It is the catalog of how to write a must read. Um, also, uh, if you have any questions, any feedback for our show, any, anything if, if you love AJ's voice and you're frustrated with mine, we wanna hear emails at hello@dwbpodcast.com. Also, at our domain, we've got free resources for you, some really good stuff to help you along on your journey.

Here's the ultimate reminder. You know it. Say it with me. Don't write that book. Write the greatest book you can.