

MERYL: Hey everyone. This is your Rebel Nutritionist. Welcome back to another podcast episode. I am so thrilled today to have keynote speaker and author Alan Stein Jr. with me, we're going to get right into it because I think this is going to be an exciting and passionate conversation if nothing else. So, Alan, I'm going to actually let you take it away and tell us a little bit more about what you do, how you got started, why and where your passion and helping people stems from. So take it away.

ALAN: Absolutely. And I am sure we are going to have a fun and passionate conversation.

I've been looking forward to this since we put it on the calendar. So it's lovely to be with you. As far as my background what's most important for your listeners to know is that I actually fell in love with the game of basketball at five years old and here 40 years later. Basketball is still a major staple of my life.

And the reason I say that is I say with immense gratitude, how thankful I am that I've been able to build a life and make a living around something I'm really passionate about. And, I was taught at a very young age that one of the keys to not only success, but **one of the keys to high-performance and happiness and fulfillment is finding your string zone and your string zone is the intersection between what you love to do and what you're naturally pretty good at.**

And, and for a good portion of my life, that was as a basketball player then that point of intersection moved to being a basketball performance coach. And now I'm in kind of my third actor, third iteration. As a corporate keynote speaker and author. But many of the principles and strategies that I share stemmed from my time as a basketball player and coach and the lessons that I've learned from some really great players.

So having grown up around the game and having so many teachers and coaches pour into me I think that's really what steered me towards going into a profession based on service and based on filling other people's buckets.

MERYL: I love that. That's great. So, I guess the question is, now that you're doing the speaking and you've written the book and all that, what, what are you teaching people or coaching people about, right.

What is the message?

ALAN: The, foundation of the pyramid is **performance**. I try and help folks on an individual level with their individual performance things like mindset and habits and discipline so that they can **show up as their best self**. In every area of their life, whether that's as a parent or a spouse or that's in their chosen vocation.

I also help groups work on their organizational performance and building team cohesion and chemistry and culture, but it doesn't matter if that's a sports or a corporate team, the principles and strategies of culture and cohesion have very, very high utility. And then there are certainly one-offs of those things like leadership performance, the ability to impact and influence others sales performance being able to, to be a tremendous active listener and truly connect with the prospect so that, that you can sell your product or service, but the red thread that combines everything I talk about is performance and optimizing.

MERYL: And that is a fabulous message. And I think that's where there's a lot of parallels, although people might not see it. So I'm going to, I'm going to bring it to light as far as the

parallel with what you do and the work that we do, because like you said, it's a lot about the mindset. How are people organizing their lives?

So that they can have what we call health, wellness, and longevity. And we talk about the same things, right? It's just the modality of how we deliver them, maybe a little bit different, but I think that the thing that is important and one of the things that we really focus on a lot here. And I don't think that resonates all the time with people is.

The mindset piece and **how much your mindset really does influence your physical ability.**

And I think you probably see that we're more in sports, right? Where it's, you can have a perfect physical right specimen in terms of the training and all that. But if their mindset is not really focused and, and clear, then it really interferes with their performance.

So can you speak to that a little?

ALAN: Absolutely well, **mindset is without question, the biggest differentiator** and the biggest separator between mediocre and good, good to great and great to absolutely elite. And prior to diving into mindset, kind of want to tie a few of the things that you just said together, because there is so much alignment and harmony between what you teach and believe in what I teach and believe.

And I always believe in **approaching human beings from a holistic approach.** And you know, that, that we need to make sure we're prioritizing and emphasizing our physical wellness, our mental wellness, our emotional wellness, and spiritual wellness, if that's appropriate to, to your listeners. But, but those things.

Are highly interrelated. And I mean, even when I'm working with corporate executives, I'm talking to them about the importance of getting proper sleep and hydrating and eating well and exercising because **the physical is directly connected to the mental, which is directly connected to the emotional.**

So while these might be. Different pillars. They're all interrelated. And I don't think they can be compartmentalized. I don't think that, that you can even be the best in any area of your life if you're not physically fit and taking care of your nutrition and your sleep and those types of things. So I just love the fact that no matter what our specific area of expertise is, we all kind of have principles that support each other.

As far as mindset is concerned **The foundation of what I call a winner's mindset is the belief that I'll just simply do the best I can with what I have,** where I am. That no matter what I'm showing up for, I'm going to do the best I can with what I have, where I am and **inherent in that belief is that I'm going to eliminate a trilogy of behaviors that will undermine my performance.**

And I know from personal experience will also undermine happiness and fulfillment, and that is **blaming, complaining, and making excuses.** That is a trilogy of behaviors that would do us all, some good to, if we can't completely eliminate than at least drastically reduced, because those things do nothing to improve our situation or to make things better.

And, and ultimately a winner's mindset is the belief that no matter what happens in the outer. Circumstances events, what people say, what people do it doesn't dictate your inner world that **no matter what's going on around you doesn't change your attitude, your perspective, your mindset, or how you show up.**

It means **you've completely held yourself fully responsible and accountable and take extreme ownership over the fact that you create your reality** and that you create how you're going to show up in the world. And you're not at the mercy of what's going on. Around you. And I know from my personal experience, this is not something I've completely mastered at present.

It's something that I've made improvements on and I'm getting better and I'm moving in the right direction. But I will be working on my own mindset and trying to level up. For the rest of my life.

MERYL: and that is so true because everything that you just said correlates back to what I hear every day from my clients.

Right. I think we get so stuck in the culture, in that diet, culture mentality. people feel like, okay, well I'm coming in and I'm starting a program. And in three days I should see some, some results. And **if I don't see results in, in three weeks or whatever that is, there's the blame game** or whatever that looks like.

So what you said just before about all of those aspects is so true, is that we do create our own reality, but we have to step away from the noise. I think that comes from the outside. And I think that is so hard especially in the work that we do because people come in, oh, I'm supposed to be doing this.

Doing all these things, I'm exercising the right way. I think I'm eating the right way. And yet you try and upend that thought process, because we back into things just, just like you said, I back into everything with sleep. I do back into things with emotion. Where are you at emotionally?

Are you doing self care? Are you all of these things that people don't think about it. Because they just want to come in and they want to start a program. they want to get the results and they expect these results to happen almost instantaneously. I'm sure you probably see that with your corporate people to write these beats you know, Type A go, go, go.

What do you mean? I have to focus on sleep. What do you mean? I have to focus on spiritual and then it, and that I find for me trying to explain that to people. Well, you got to trust me when I tell you that it's going to work. If you do that. And they're like, but wait, I don't get that.

ALAN: Oh man, there's so much gold in everything you just said right there.

## Why we need to take a holistic approach

And two things in particular stick out and they do have to do with mindset. One, I think **we live in a society that tries to compartmentalize, especially our physical wellbeing and health**, and that when someone says I go to orange theory fitness three times a week. And I eat salads for lunch.

So I'm living a healthy lifestyle and it's like, yes, those, those things are great. And I'm glad that you do them, but, but **a healthy lifestyle is just that it's an entire lifestyle**. It's not a checklist of things that you just say today. I went to orange theory and today I ate a salad. So I was healthy. A healthy lifestyle has to be.

All of your decisions, the totality of everything that you do. So it's not something that you simply check boxes, **it's the way you choose to live**. And if you value your health and your

physical wellbeing, then most of the time you will choose. To get good sleep. Most of the time, you will choose to stay adequately hydrated.

Most of the time you will choose to eat healthy foods and to move your body, whatever that may look like. So it's not about checking things off the list. It's about a lifestyle of doing those things. More often than not. And the reason that I say most of the time is **I don't want anyone to feel stifled by perfection.**

I am far from perfect. I'm not batting a thousand in this game of life. But generally speaking, most of the decisions I make in the areas of my life that are important to me and that I value. I make pretty good decisions and I've exercised that discipline muscle over the last 20, 30 years of my life to do that.

## Why we need to focus on process and not the outcome

Another thing that you said that is so important, and this is integral to the winner's mindset is **learning how to detach from outcomes and focus solely on the process.** And the habits and the micro-steps, there is nothing wrong with having a goal. There's nothing wrong with having a north star. So whether someone says I want to be a certain weight or I want to have a certain body fat percentage, or I want to look a certain way that no judgment for me on what someone desires, that's completely up to them.

But what I would recommend and highly encouraged. Is once you have that, that crystallized vision or goal, then take your sights off of that and put it in the day to day, put it into the process. **What are the decisions and behaviors and habits I need to develop that will greatly increase the chance of that happening?**

And when you can learn to live in the process and love the process, then you'll no longer have that mindset, which you brought up so perfectly. Hey, I've been following this diet for three days and I don't notice a change. Hey, I've worked out at the gym for one week straight and I still look the same because you're not worried about any of that.

**All you're worried about is what you have control over, which is showing up and making good decisions as consistently as possible.** And then just trust and believe. That the chips will fall where they may, and things will eventually end up working out in your favor. **So detaching from outcomes and learning to love the work and the process and the journey is vital to a high-performing mindset.**

MERYL: And I'm so glad you said that because there's one of the things that you say, right? The importance of **not getting fixated on the end game and focusing on taking baby steps,** consistency in how the small changes can make the biggest impact. And I say that. Again in a little bit of a different way, but it's basically the same thing people say to me, well, how are you so healthy?

How are you this? How are you? And I'm like, I am terribly consistent. You know, it is, it is all about being consistent and it's not about being perfect people say to me, well, you're perfect. I'm like, no there was a picture of me on, I don't know, I did a Tik TOK last night. I had some granola I eat ice cream.

I eat pizza But it's, but it is how do I balance that in my life and, and indulge on the things that I want to and know how to pull back and not just kind of go full hog and say, oh, well, I screwed up today. So might as well just, I never understood that mindset or that way of thinking, but, I think one of the things we just said it, but if you want to talk a little more about the baby steps

to the consistency And a lot of the work that we do is, is looking under the hood. As I always say, it's where the imbalances and the nuances are. And I love science. I always say for me, science is sexy.

Not everybody thinks it's sexy, but I go deep and I'm looking at the biochemistry and really the nuances of where people's imbalances are. And I always say, well, you're not going to get to the north star, right. Your north star if your body is imbalanced and that is in many, many ways. And I, again, I think we see that with this stuff that you talk about improve the whole, you must improve each part.

ALAN: Without question. And I think the best analogy to that is if you tasked me with building a brick wall. I would not be even remotely worried about the brick wall at the end. The only thing I'd be focused on is laying each and every brick with care and precision because I know that if I can pick up one brick and set it exactly where it needs to be.

And then I pick up another brick and set it exactly where it needs to go. If I do that consistently, then it's only a matter of time until the wall takes care of itself. I don't have to worry about the wall. All I have to worry about is each and every brick. And in that analogy the bricks are the daily decisions that we make.

It's the reps if you will. And you know again, if, you and I are just now formally meeting for the first time for this call and yeah. Having not known a whole lot about you, if someone asked me why you were so healthy and physically fit, I already know the answer to that. **You consistently make good decisions.**

Because that's the same answer for anyone that's physically fit. If you see someone that is, that is really good at their craft, whether it's, an amazing piano player or a great basketball player, and someone says, well, why are they great? I know the answer to that. **They've put in deliberate practice during the unseen hours** now.

Yes. To be an elite-level basketball player, it certainly helps to have some physical characteristics that not everyone has, some predispositions. No one would argue that LeBron James was born with certain genetic predispositions that allow him to be an elite-level basketball player. But really outside of professional sport.

That stuff's not near as important. **If you want to get good at any skill or master any craft, it comes down to quality repetitions and deliberate practice.** You want to look or perform or feel a certain way. It comes down to consistently making good decisions when it comes to your, your health and your wellness.

## How social media can pull us away from focusing on process

**And all of these things are process centered.** We just get so focused on these outcomes. That we forget about the process and, and I have high empathy and compassion for people that get lost in the outcomes. I do think social media exacerbates that significantly. **Social media in general tends to highlight and reward outcomes and not on the process.**

We only see the finished product. We only see what someone else wants us to see. And we see their successes. Very rarely on social media do we get to steal your term a peek under the hood to see everything that went into that. **Most of the time in order to get good at anything, the process is going to be messy.**

It's going to be challenging. It's going to be uncomfortable. But that's the good stuff. And I think if, if folks can learn to appreciate that and actually enjoy the process, then the results just become a bonus. They just become a by-product there's another part of having this, this mindset, **this winner's mindset is not attaching your self-worth and your confidence in your self-belief to any of these outcomes.**

You know, a perfect example. So I, you mentioned I have a book, I've written a follow-up book to that. That will be out on April 12th. And I've spent about a year with my coauthor writing the best book that I'm capable of. And that's the only part that I have control over is the writing. I don't control how many people will buy it.

I don't control if people will like it. And that's okay. Once it leaves my fingertips on my keyboard. Then it's for somebody else to decide, but no matter how that book does, whether it's a raging success or a humongous flop, my self-worth and my confidence in my belief in myself are not tied to that outcome.

Now obviously I have preferences, I'm not insane. I would prefer that people liked the book because I want to make an impact. I would prefer that a lot of people will buy it. but I'm not dependent on those outcomes. I enjoyed writing the book. I put my heart and soul into it. I feel good about what I wrote and that's it.

That's what I have tied to myself, belief in my self-confidence. And it's the same thing from a physical standpoint I'm 45 years old. I'm in pretty good physical shape for 45 years. I don't have the same abs that I had when I was 20 and I can't run as fast and jump as high or lift as much as I could when I was 20.

And I'm okay with that. **I don't play that comparison game and that that's not where I derive my self worth from I'm as healthy as I can be at present. And that's what makes me feel good.**

MERYL: great. so when you say that, that's interesting because it did bring up something for me when you talked about not judging yourself on that outcome or what other people are thinking or whatever that is.

And I think a lot of people in our space do that. I think a big part of it is the fear, but the lack of confidence, the lack of self-confidence and. Judging their failures or basing their success on that. So how do you speak to someone who is judging themselves on that?

ALAN: Right. it's really easy to say. And it's really hard to do.

Oh, you are a hundred percent correct with that. And if I'm speaking to someone about that, I **absolutely come from a place of empathy and compassion** because for most of my life, That is what I tied my own self-confidence to was my own achievement.

And I was outcome-based for most of my life. Many of these, I guess, enlightened and epiphany moments that I've had have been over the last several years. So most of the things that I teach and speak to I know both sides of the coin because I've lived them. And I know that **on this side, I've found a much higher level of happiness, fulfillment, confidence and inner peace.** So I have tremendous empathy and compassion.

What I try to explain to folks **there is nothing wrong with having desired goals.** Like, I can't stress that enough, but **we don't want you to tie your belief in confidence to achievement.**

Because when you do that, **when you tie that to outcomes, you are at the mercy of something outside of your control,** which means when I achieve, I feel good about myself.

When I fall short, I don't, when I get what I want, I feel great when I fall short, I don't. And it's even the same thing with, with moods. Like when I was talking about, this mindset of not letting the outer world dictate your inner world, most people when things in their life are going well, the sun is shining their spouses acting really super cool and nice and things at work are going great.

Then they're in a good mood, but if it starts raining, their spouse starts complaining and things at work are a little tough. Then they're in a bad mood. And I don't want to be on that rollercoaster because all of those things are outside of my control. I don't control whether or not it rains. I don't control what, I don't have a spouse, but if I did, I don't control what they say.

And I certainly don't control what goes on at work. **So if I'm going to allow my mood to be dictated by things outside of my control, that's a really rocky and rollercoaster existence.** And I don't want to do that. And it's the same thing with achievement. If I only feel good when I hit my goals and I feel lousy when I don't.

I just don't want to be on that bus anymore. So I want to make sure that I'm process-driven and oriented and say that **I'm going to have this type of mindset and perspective and attitude, no matter what happens with all of those things.** And this doesn't mean that I don't value reaching goals. This doesn't mean that I don't have preferences.

I would prefer that the sun shines over rain. I would prefer that I'm getting along with my hypothetical spouse than not. I would prefer that things at work are going well. But the universe doesn't care about my preferences whatever's going to happen is going to happen. **So a part of this mindset is learning how to accept reality** and saying, you know what?

It is raining outside. That is a fact that is reality, but **I can choose how I'm going to respond** to that rain. So once again, I maintain power. I keep the keys to the car the entire time.

MERYL: Yep. So true. And, that really follows on **I did a podcast last week with Nancy Levin and we talked about boundaries and creating your own space and keeping your self-worth inside that space and protected.**

And **you don't have to answer to anybody else other than yourself.** So that does speak to a lot of that. And that is a lot of the message of what we consistently say over and over. So I think there's a tremendous amount of value in that. So on the same topic, but, I'm gonna switch a little you've worked with some pretty high profile people who is, and it doesn't have to be a high profile, but I'm not asking for names, but who has been your most memorable client?

Again, it's not about naming names, but really what has that personality been? What has that, that made you feel like, wow this, this was a memorable person and why?

ALAN: Right before I answer that, I just popped into my head that I wanted to make one more point about what you had said earlier because I don't want this to be lost on your listeners.

MERYL: Yes.

ALAN: Said that, that everything I'm talking about is easy to say and hard to do. And boy, is that the truth? **There's not a single thing that I've shared so far that is easy to implement or easy to execute.** These are all challenges that I still face in my life. Like I said, I haven't mastered any of this stuff.

I've made improvements in most of these areas. And, and I feel good about that, but these are **things that will continue to be challenges for the rest of my life**. I don't think these are things that kind of like the game of golf. I don't think you can ever actually master. So I just want to make sure folks listening to this know that it's not lost on me, that I'm saying most of this stuff in kind of a matter-of-fact tone.

But none of this stuff is easy. None of it, there is nothing easy about getting rid of blaming complaining, and making excuses. **There is nothing easy about detaching from outcomes and learning to love and live in the process**. There is nothing easy about making good decisions consistently the vast majority of your time because we all know how many temptations there are out there to do otherwise.

So please know folks, if you're listening to this and **you're having a little bit of a hard time and you feel a little stuck or you feel a little stressed. You're not alone**. That is completely normal. And yes, this stuff is really, really, really hard, but even not knowing you, I know you've got the strength to be able to overcome it and to make the incremental changes necessary.

So I just want to make sure your listeners know that it's not lost on me, how challenging this stuff is.

MERYL: And, and I appreciate that. And I know they do because I say that all the time too, I always say this is work and this is effort. But like you just said, anything that you want in life, whether you want to be a good parent, whether you want to be successful at your career, requires work and effort.

Nothing is just going to fall into our laps. You know, you and I didn't end up where we are today. Because it fell into our laps. I have been working at this for my whole life too, and it's been the ebb and the flow, and all of it. And I know the work is hard and like you, I do this work every day.

I am up early. I am committed to being in the gym. you know, I was working out this morning and I got there a little later because I was able to sleep in on this nice Friday morning. And I was walking around and I was just watching a couple of the people working out and I'm thinking.

just sometimes people are not working quite as hard as they should and I'm just going, you know what? I feel so good because I feel strong and I, I finally, after 50 years, I'm comfortable enough in my own skin to say that you have to say that I like how I finally look. And that strong is the new sexy, and I don't need someone to comment to me that you look good, right?

Like **I think especially as a woman, we wait for that outside validation.** And so, yeah, that for me has been part of my struggle in my work and all of that, but it is, it is work. And I, and I thank you for sharing that because we all do this

ALAN: We absolutely do. And I'm still going to put a pin in the question you ask about my favorite client.

I have not forgotten about that, but I just want to keep going on this tangent here.

Oh, another major downfall. For a lot of people is playing the comparison game is comparing. What they have to, what others have to, what they've achieved to what others have achieved to who they are, to what others they perceive to be.

And once again, I think social media has exacerbated that immensely, and that is another slippery slope to play. You pick any, any pillar of life and I can promise you within 10 seconds. I can name someone that's doing better than me in that area. I promise you, it doesn't matter if it's something superficial like I can find someone more handsome than me.

I can find someone with more money than me. I can find someone with better abs, a nicer car who is speaking on bigger stages, who has sold more books who has more Instagram followers. **It won't take long to find someone doing better than me in any of those categories.** So once again, if my self-worth.

And, and confidence is tied to that. Then I'm going to always feel lousy and I don't want to feel lousy. You know, I want to have a sense of contentment and fulfillment and inner peace. So I just stopped playing the comparison game. And I just asked myself, **am I showing up as the best version of myself consistently in all of these areas?**

And the reason I say that is I'm sure that you have some listeners that know how physically fit you are. They compare themselves to you. And then that makes them feel bad because they're not on the level that you are. And all I would say to that person is there's no reason to compare. **You guys are running different races, you're on different journeys.**

You know, there's no reason to compare. Just ask yourself today. Did I make as many good decisions that are in my own best interest for becoming the person that I want to be as I could? And if the answer is yes to that, you should sleep very soundly at night and you should feel great because you had a great day, regardless of the outcomes that you got.

If you can say yes to that, you, you really had a great day. And that's why that comparison game is deadly. And I know this from experience because I got caught in that trap and here's the thing with most of these. I'll still have minor regressions and I'll still have moments where I find myself playing the comparison game, or I find myself dejected because I didn't get the outcome that I want, but I'm at a point in my life now where I have a heightened sense of awareness and I can catch myself playing those games very quickly.

And I just kind of laugh it off to myself and just say, Alan, there you go again. You know, you're comparing yourself to someone you just saw on Instagram. That ain't helping. There you go again, Alan. You're dejected because you didn't get that speaking gig, dude, just move on to the next play. Not a big deal.

So I'm, I'm finally at a point where **I can catch myself and retrain my thoughts and have much more productive thoughts moving forward**. But anyone listening to this, don't worry about where others are on their journey and on their path. **Focus on where you are and focus on where you're trying to go and create a system and a plan and a way of living that will allow you to connect those two dots.**

### 3 strategies to help you stay focused on your goal

MERYL: Amazing. What are some of the strategies, because I think people can hear this and yes, they can relate. But what is a strategy? Because I think people like to walk away with something that they can use. Right. So we're saying, okay, well, try not to feel bad, but what is something that someone can implement?

Let's say that something that you used in the very beginning to try and set yourself on that path. Because I think people like to know here's a tool that I can use to start to do that.

ALAN: I'll give you three. Cause I love being, in the trenches and, as a practitioner, giving folks practical, actionable strategies, the first thing is you have to realize that for the most part, your mindset, your confidence, your sense of self-worth is stemmed from.

How you talk to yourself, that little voice inside, and most people, especially high performers are way more critical of themselves than they'd ever be of someone else that when they mess up, they just compound that with guilt and shame and self-loathing. But if a friend or a loved one messed up, they'd offer them empathy and compassion a proverbial arm around the shoulder.

**So the very first thing is simply speak to yourself the same way you'd speak to a loved one or a friend, with the same love and grace and compassion.** You know, when you mess up, pretend that it was a sibling or a parent or a child or a good friend or coworker that messed up, how would you talk to them and talk to yourself in that same light?

So that's one another actionable strategy is. **Figure out the things in your life, the activities that when you do them, you simply feel better about yourself.** You know whether it's, it's taking a yoga class or jumping on a Peloton bike or doing some pushups, whether it's watching a documentary or listening to a podcast like this or reading a book whether it's meditation or prayer or having conversation with a loved one, but **come up with a list of the things.**

They just make you feel good. They energize you. They make you smile. They make you feel alive. And then I want you to **examine your current morning and evening routine. How do you**

**normally spend the first 60 minutes every day when you wake up and how do you normally spend the last 60 minutes before you go to bed?**

And then I want you to do everything you can to start to **integrate some of the things in that initial list. Into the bookends of your day.** if you say, Hey doing yoga makes me feel great. Well then find 15 minutes in the morning or evening to do 15 minutes worth of yoga poses. If you love diving into a really good book or listening to some classical music, make the time on the bookends of your day to do those things, the meat of our day.

Can many times be incredibly chaotic and harder to make time to do those things. But if we're all intentional and purposeful, we can make the time to do them on the bookends. And even just 15 to 20 minutes of something that lights us up and that we really enjoy on either end can make a huge difference in how we feel.

And in our perspective, And in how we show up and just, those two things alone. If folks are willing to talk to themselves with more grace and compassion and they're willing to integrate those types of things into their life which will allow them to show up as their best self. I mean, that's, that's to right off the top of my head, that, that I would love to see folks just try to implement on a regular basis.

MERYL: Awesome. That that is great. And thank you for that, because I think that is definitely like you said, practical and doable for people. So Amazing. All right. Well, so if you want to indulge me in the, in that question that I had at,

ALAN: I do, I didn't forget about it. I promise. All right. Well, one, I'll give a name that most people will recognize, especially if you follow the game of basketball and that would be **Kevin Durant**, who plays for the Brooklyn nets.

You know, many people consider him, one of the best players in the game today, if not the best. And I had a chance to meet Kevin when he was 15 years old and got to work him out through high school. He actually graduated from Montrose Christian, which is the school that I was working as the basketball performance coach for.

And, Kevin was always a very remarkable young man. You know he was, he was rather shy and somewhat introverted was a man of few words back then. But the kid loved to play the game of basketball. He was incredibly open to coaching. Like he craved having people that would pour into him.

Now he was a confident guy, but he would mix his confidence with humility to stay open to coaching. He understood how important the basics and the fundamentals were. So he never thought he was above working on his footwork or his shooting mechanics. He knew how important that stuff was. He recognized.

In order to get somewhere he's never been, he was going to have to do some things he'd never done. Um, Which is kind of where I came into the picture and started helping him with some of his weight training and conditioning because he had never done that before. but Kevin was always a great teammate as well, you know?

I mean, he was. Always the most talented player on his team, but he was always a great teammate to everybody else on the team. And, those are some of the traits mixed with his

immense physical talent that have allowed him to ascend to be one of the best players in the game today. And you know, when I met him at 15, I would have never been able to predict that he'd be this good.

But in that same breath, I can say I'm not even remotely surprised, he had all the raw materials to be an elite-level player. So, so Kevin Durant is certainly one that I'll bring up, but I also want to bring up a player that I can promise you, none of your listeners have ever heard of. And that was actually the point guard that was on Kevin's high school team.

His senior year was a Japanese-born player named Tashi Ito who ended up playing in Portland university in Portland, Oregon, and then has gone on to have a really long professional career in Japan and Tashi. Maybe the best leader that I've ever met at that age? I mean, he was just a remarkable leader.

I mean, not just from a vocal standpoint, but from a modeling standpoint, he's one of the most selfless human beings I've ever met. One of the toughest kids that I've ever met both physically and mentally, and, and was kind of the glue to that, that team. And while he did not have the same physical talent that Kevin Durant had.

Tashi. Absolutely got every ounce of potential out of the talent that he did have. And yeah, he'll go down as one of the best leaders that I've ever met.

Wow. That's cool. We'll have to go look him up. I know my kids are going to be so excited that you said Kevin Durant. Cause we are, we're a big basketball family.

My daughter. Played four years of college ball in New York. So they're going to hear that and they're gonna be like, oh my God, we gotta go meet this. But anyway

ALAN: you know what just popped into my mind and this is sometimes how my mind works. I believe I promised your listeners. Three strategies before. And then I think I only gave them two and I don't ever want to be the guy that falls short. I've got one, one more strategy that I hope folks find incredibly helpful.

And this is a tool that I really use today. So as I mentioned before, I'm 45 years old at. And I've got a vision of the man that I want to be at 65. Now I'll be the first to tell you, I recognize the time is not promised tomorrow is not guaranteed. There's nothing that says that I'll live to see 65, but if I continue to take care of myself, the way that I do now, barring something unforeseen.

I don't see why it's not going to happen. And without getting too granular. Let me tell you guys the vision that I have for myself in 20 years, I want the 65-year-old Allen to be physically, mentally, and emotionally. I want the 65-year-old Allen to have a very deep connection with his children and his family and his friends.

I want the 65-year-old Alan to be doing what he considers meaningful work in service of other people. That's who I envisioned myself becoming. So how I apply this to my life now is **that's the filter I use for every decision I make in my life**. Whether it's what I'm going to eat for lunch, to who I'm going to follow on Instagram, I ask myself, **is making this decision going to take me closer to becoming that guy, or is it going to take me further away?**

And then my goal every day of my life is to get as many yeses as possible to make as many decisions as I can to align with that. Once again, not perfect, not batting a thousand. But if most of the decisions that I make are in alignment with becoming that guy. Then in 20 years from now, that is the man I will be, and it won't be an accident.

It won't be luck. It will be, cause **I'm designing my future right now in the present with the decisions that I'm making.** And, and that's kind of a tool that, that I kind of say to myself every night before I go to bed. I mean, I don't necessarily verbalize it, but it's just the thought process. And I say, **I just traded 24 hours of my life.**

**For the progress that I made today. Am I happy with that trade?** And if my answer is, yes, I feel good about that trade. Then I can rest very peacefully at night and get some sound, sleep on the rare occasion that I'm not happy with that trade. It wasn't the best day for me. I didn't make as many good decisions as I can.

I give myself grace and compassion and I still get a night of restful sleep because I say, you know what? Tomorrow is a new day. Today is always over tomorrow. And while today was not my best performance per se. I'm going to do a better job tomorrow. And I give myself that grace and compassion. **So any decision that you make, just ask yourself, is this an alignment and taking you closer to the person you want to become, and when you can have the self-awareness and the ability to slow your life down and control the decisions you make, it's an absolute game changer.**

So I promised you three actionable strategies. Finally delivered.

MERYL: Thank you. That's a great, great strategy. Again, we're very much a parallel on that. I say similar things I always say to people. Have you made a choice? Yeah, what you put on the end of your fork matters. Right. And are you choosing to support yourself?

Are you nourishing yourself in the right way? Every day in a healthy way every day? So it's similar in that In those decisions that we make and the choices that we make. So this has been

amazing. I mean, I think we could go on longer, but our, we know our, my listeners' attention span is a little short, so I think we do need to wrap it up but thank you so much for being on today.

ALAN: I am grateful for the amazing conversation. Hopefully it won't be the last time that we do this.

MERYL: No, it was my pleasure. This was fun. And I appreciate you and know this will definitely not be the last time we connect.

All right, everybody. This is your Rebel Nutritionist signing off until next time. Make it a great and healthy day.