



JIM HARSHAW, JR.

Clarity of Action. Peace of Mind.

Success for the Athletic-Minded Man Podcast

Action Plan Episode #520

Mike Robbins

If your identity is built on performance, one setback can turn your whole life into a free fall.

Mike Robbins lived that... literally.

He was a Stanford pitcher chasing the big leagues when one pitch blew out his arm, and eventually forced the gut-level conversation with his family: "I gotta hang it up."

No jersey retirement. No victory lap. Just the sudden death of the plan he'd been living for since he was seven, and the question most high-achieving men avoid because it's terrifying: *Who am I when the thing I'm best at gets taken away?*

In this episode of "*Success for the Athletic-Minded Man*," Mike and I go straight into the uncomfortable truth: discipline is a weapon, but it's a terrible identity.

When you're wired to "win at all costs," you can look unstoppable on paper while quietly bleeding out in real life— stress up, connection down, and that constant pressure to act like you've got it handled. In this conversation, you'll see exactly where that mindset helps and where it starts costing you your peace, your relationships, and your ability to actually enjoy the life you're building.

You'll also walk away with tools you can use immediately: a simple way to name what's really going on in your life, a new lens on imposter syndrome that turns it into fuel instead of shame, and one practical 24-hour action step Mike gives to get unstuck.

If you've been trying to "discipline" your way out of a problem that requires support, this episode will give you the reset— and the next move.

Top Quotes From This Episode

"Sports, it's a blessing and a curse. The dark side can be that we get so obsessed with the outcome. We get so obsessed with like winning at all costs. And if I don't win, I'm a loser. And we gotta be careful because there's a dark side to it if we're not careful."

"If you're feeling any imposter syndrome in your life right now, I wanna say to you, number one, you're not alone. Number two, congratulations. because that means you've put yourself out there, that means you're doing something that matters to you. That's something to be celebrated, not to be ashamed of."

Show Notes

This episode touches on the following key topics and ideas:

- **Share this episode! (1:30):** Share the podcast on social media by tagging me and using the hashtag #SAMpod:
 - **YouTube:** [@jimharshaw1](#)
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 - **Instagram:** [@jimharshawjr](#)
 - **LinkedIn:** [Jim Harshaw, Jr.](#)
- **Bench-Clearing Brawl and a Friendship Built Over Time (2:02):** Mike shares the wild Stanford vs. Arizona State brawl story that later became the unlikely origin of his connection with Damon Lembi.
- **The One Pitch That Changed Everything (5:41):** Mike describes the moment his arm blew out, and how that led to Tommy John and additional surgeries.
- **Feeling Lost After Success (9:07):** Mike shares how scary it was to lose baseball before he'd made money or a name— especially coming from real financial hardship and wanting to provide for his mom and future family.
- **Therapy, Books, and the Start of Real Growth (11:41):** Mike talks about getting a therapist (rare for young men in the late 90s) and using books and personal growth to stabilize himself.
- **Say It Out Loud and Get Around Other Men (15:04):** Mike shares how therapy, workshops, and men's groups helped him realize he wasn't broken— he was human.
- **Mentorship From Dan Millman and Richard Carlson (21:27):** Mike shares how persistence opened doors to both authors, and how Richard Carlson helped

him land agents, a book deal, and even wrote the foreword to his first book before passing away.

- **The Blessing and the Dark Side of Outcome Obsession (28:19):** Mike breaks down how sports build grit and focus, but can also create an unhealthy “win at all costs” identity.
- **The Iceberg Exercise (32:30):** Mike teaches a simple team exercise that lowers the “waterline” and creates real connection by naming what’s under the surface.
- **What’s an action item the listener can take in the next 24-48 hours? (35:58):** First, write down what you’re excited about and what you’re scared about, then share it with someone you trust. Second, ask for help in the next 24 hours, because it gets you support, models leadership, and gives others the chance to do what they already like doing.

List of Resources Mentioned in the Episode

The Learn-It-All™ Podcast with Damon Lembi: [Stop Recognizing Performance. Start Appreciating People.](#) | [Mike Robbins](#)

[WATCH] [1990 Baseball Fight College Arizona State University University Southern California ASU USC](#)

["Way of the Peaceful Warrior: A Book That Changes Lives"](#) by Dan Millman

[WATCH] ["Peaceful Warrior"](#)

["Don't Sweat the Small Stuff . . . and It's All Small Stuff: Simple Ways to Keep the Little Things from Taking Over Your Life"](#) by Richard Carlson

["Comeback"](#) by Dave Dravecky

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Mike Robbins

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