

Interview with Thulani DeMarsay

Alicia Dunams: Hi and welcome back! It's Alicia Dunams here with [All In](#) and I am excited to introduce our next guest. Actually she is the winner of the -- All In - Who's Gonna Be My Next Guest? podcast survey that I had over on my website at aliciadunams.com and she is Thulani DeMarsay. Now Thulani is really a life coach, she's been a life coach for over fifteen years and she just got accepted to a PhD program and launched her new book, which she wrote during Bestseller In A Weekend. And that's, "[A Holistic Approach to Addiction Recovery](#)." She also has another book called, "[How to Manage Stress and Get the Most from Your Days](#)." So, Thulani is definitely the person to speak to in terms of taking your life to the next level, alleviating yourself from stress, and also working with people who have addiction. So we're gonna be talking about more of that today. So... Hi Thulani! Are you here?

Thulani DeMarsay: Hi Alicia! How are you?

A: I'm doing really well. I'd love to ask this question, are you ready to play [All In](#)?

T: I am so ready to play All In. Let's play!

A: Absolutely. So I introduced you to the audience I want you to tell them more about yourself.

T: Yes, yes, definitely. So, as you've mentioned for the past 15 years or so, I've been doing life coaching primarily specializing in stress managements, supporting people around, defining their vision and purpose. A lot of the work that I do is with the organizations with leaders and executives and we also work with individuals. I'm actually here in a Holistic Health Practice for women, we see women here everyday... doing obstetrics as well as I do stress management and counseling here and it's a wonderful place to just be supported by really amazing women. So, I love what I do and honestly, it doesn't feel like work for me, Alicia. It's just being able to support people in their health, in their well-being also evolving in terms of helping them tighten to find their purpose, their passion and their reason for being if you were...

A: That's beautiful! I love... we did a pre interview when you won the contest and you made my day with you 'coz you do a lot of visualization boards and you really believe the power of visualization and manifestations...



T: Absolutely!

A: and when you said that there was you know my name or picture of me with those one of your visualization boards I was like – Oh my goodness! Hahaha! That was quite touching for me. Hahaha! So, that was really sweet.

T: Absolutely! And, I meant that very sincerely. In fact yesterday we had a group of about 10 – 12 women come to gather for what I call a vision board party. We just came together, we started with the grounding of meditative exercise to just really get clear on what is it that we'll seek to manifest and months and months ago even before I met you through Bestseller In A Weekend, I knew I wanted to connect with you in some way; I just didn't know how and it just manifested. I think the power of intention is so amazing.

A: The power... it's all about intention and tending what you wanna create in life is so important...

T: You should've been my mentor but you didn't even know it.

A: Hahaha! It's wild. You know when... with Bestseller in a Weekend and since I'm working with hundreds of people, you don't know what kind of impact that you're having and it's very a powerful thing. I'm reading the book – Bob Burg - I've actually interviewed him for All In. He wrote book called [The Go-Giver](#) and he says the power... he has this laws of success and he says the power to influence and impact people... the number of people is very powerful in terms of creating success... that's one thing I'm excited about my Bestseller In A Weekend program which you're working about. Let's talk more about you. So you are a life coach, you're helping women; I'd love to get a story by asking -- what is your favorite leadership? So we can make that a tweetable.

T: Sure, sure. So, I have a few but one of my favorite ones and this has been with me for many years because my work is around resilience and supporting people towards building resilience. There's a quote by Dr. King that says, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." And I think that not just as a leader but as people, I think it's so important that we understand that our true character really comes in to play when we're faced with obstacles and adversity. So, that's really one of my favorite quotes, another quote that I absolutely love by Roy Disney – "When your values are clear to you, making decisions becomes easier." So, when we're leading from that place of honoring our values and being inspired through our values; it



makes it so much easier to just live our lives and make certain decisions. I've been able to see the manifestation of that in my own life; the clearer I've got in with my values.

A: Well it's true that you can become committed when you're clear about what future is and part of that is having a vision and that's why I love how you create those visualization boards which is something I am going to go back to. I used to do it when I wrote my book. Something that I haven't done in a few years and I'm a big-brother/ big-sister and I was talking to my little sister while we're on a hike yesterday and I said you know – the next time we meet we're gonna do our vision boards; she's like – What's that? Hahaha! So it's so important; without a vision, people will perish.

T: That's right, that's so true. It's so true. I'm so happy to hear that. So you're a big sister to a little girl and boy?

A: Just to a little girl. Well she's not that quite little, she's 15. Hahaha! She's 15.

T: Okay, that's interesting...

A: It's wonderful and let's talk more about. Okay so Martin Luther King always you know always creating and being the articulating leadership quotes' that was one of my favorites. But I wanna ask you particularly, how are you showing up as a leader in your life?

T: In different ways. So number one, I think it's really honoring who I am. Alicia, for the longest time I felt like I had to sort of adapt and forgive me, you may have mentioned this as well. So the masculine type of energy in order to umm in order to feel accepted in the leadership realm if you will. And the way that I show up for myself is really learning to honor my feminine energy and knowing when that when to integrate some of the more "Yang" energy if you will. So sort of really learning how to develop a balance with my own energies, so that's how I'm showing up certainly in terms of the more authentic as a leader; attuning to my voice. I like to use the term 'Enlightened Leader' because I think enlightened leaders care a lot about people, we care about society, we care about how one thing impacts another. And those are the things that that I really think a lot about being more conscientious, giving myself over to a vision in my purpose, in my passion. So for me, leadership is not so much about me 'Thulani' but it's about how can I bring forth the best of myself and inspire that within other people.

A: Powerful, powerful. And you talked about all these things, what are some characteristics in terms of leadership? You talked about vision, you talked about leading in the feminine which I



think is a... definitely a movement and that we've seen more lately that the planet is kind of... the paradigm shifting and people are leading in the feminine or seeing the value of feminine in terms of leadership. So what are some other characteristics you see at leaders?

T: So I see the ability to be flexible and agile, sort of recognizing my ebbs and flows in life and learning how to really dance with those ebbs and flows if you will and I think it requires an incredible level of agility. I think also being creative and thinking outside the box. I love this book by Susan Jeffers she wrote a book called '[Feel the Fear... and Do it Anyway](#)' I think that a leader... we use the term fearlessness... I'm not gonna say I never have fear because I do. As we grow and evolve to the next phase of our growth and our evolution, I think sometimes we do experience that anxiety and fear. But I think a leader feels that fear and does it anyways. Just being able to have that courage and believing in your goals and believing in your... what it is that you're really attempting to do. I believe those are some really... those are some really powerful qualities of a leader... of a leader, for me personally.

A: Absolutely....

T: I'm sorry, Alicia. I think the other thing to... thinking outside of what I think is the right way. Do you see what I mean... like really learning to listen to other people and really appreciate everybody's point-of-view and their ideas because I don't believe that there's one side for those approach, either to being leader. You now...

A: Good stuff, good stuff and a couple of things that I think about in terms of being a leader are... Wow, especially us women I think we have a huge responsibility on our shoulders to really play big. That's why I'm doing All In, that's why I will say the teacher teaches what they wanna know and I know in terms of my particular life that I'm just scratching the surface of how powerful I am.

T: Yes, yes.

A: and I was watching a Marie TV Marie Forleo and she was talking about – What if Oprah didn't play big? What if she totally shrunk and played small? Whether she didn't wanna you know make more money in a stunt man or whether she said, 'Oh I can't do this because of this and this reason? What if she plays... what... what... we would have been robbed of the gift that Oprah brings to the table.

T: Excellent.



A: ...and when you put it in that content... concept or context it really... it almost thinks –Wow, when people play small or when people shrink they are really robbing the world.

T: Absolutely, absolutely and I believe umm that that quote by Marianne Williamson is so appropriate to what you just said in terms of you know when I give myself permission to be the person that I am; to be fearless, to accomplish my goals. I give other people around me the opportunity to do the same thing certainly in paraphrasing but I think when we spoke umm initially I talked with you about like the many years that I've been involved in social service. So, my work started out doing community organizing and I did human trafficking work and helped very young girls get out of human slavery and sex trafficking. And so my life has evolved over the years and I used to equate being of service to other people umm with being impoverished or not having a lot of money and it was over the years of attending amazing seminars by people like Tony Robbins and T. Harv Eker, and Laura Longmire that I really began to think outside of the box and really say I wanna be great, I wanna be able to chart my own destiny, I'm so tired of playing small, of being around people who expect me to play small. You see what I mean? And so, now I have this wonderful community of people who expect you to succeed, who support you in your success. You know what I mean? It's such a difference because I've played small for many years in my life and as result of that I've suffered tremendously.

A: and others have suffered as well if you think about it, you take it... feels of impact...

T: Absolutely! So one of the things that I teach my clients and I try to live by my example is that I believe that I am here to express the universe or to express the divine in my life and in doing that I play full-out; and when I suppress my gifts and my talents and abilities as you've said... I robbed not only the world but I robbed myself of my own gifts.

A: Uhhmm... beautifully put, beautifully put. So let's talk a little bit about women, since women are a focus in your particular practice. What advice would you give to women in being a source of leadership?

T: Absolutely. So let me just pullback a little bit. So I have 2 types of clients who are female; we have women who are very successful in their careers but they're struggling with addiction issues. And so these are women who've been very competitive in the workforce, they're extremely successful in what they're doing but they have really been struggling with addiction, to chemical dependency whether it be alcohol and drugs, or what have you. But, when you really rollback and really look at the root cause of a lot of people's challenges around addiction,



a lot of it has to do with lack of self-acceptance and self-worth. So I believe in being a leader, especially as women, I think it's so important that we honor ourselves and that we showoff as authentic as we possibly as we can. It's not about trying to prove anything to anyone, it's not trying to be someone we're not, it's really being vulnerable in our own skin and our own flesh. So one of the first things that I do teach is honoring who you are and showing up as authentic as you can.

T: Beautiful, beautiful. It's interesting with addiction, I'm sure you see a lot of addiction in high performing women, leaders and entrepreneurs.

T: It's... In fact it's... most of my clients... I don't know, I don't know how this happened but years ago I begun just attracting leaders into my practice; it wasn't something that I intentionally set out to do. I don't know if it was because I was a competitive athlete and I don't know how all evolved but I attracted lots of leaders and high profile people whether they be clergy, politicians, executives and one of the things that I have seen repeatedly, particularly with women is that -- I need to be the best, I need to compete that constant need and drive. I believe 'has been' has what caused people to go into addictive state if you will.

A: Constantly being stimulated in some way.

T: ...being stimulated. Sort of getting high on that adrenaline and that rush if you will and that really taking the time to be more reflective, mindful, and thoughtful. So you have created a mindfulness base stress reduction program that I've been teaching here, I teach meditation classes here in Boston every week and we have people that come and they're just interested in learning strategies for managing stress because the truth of the matter is – How are we going to give to our organizations? How are we gonna show-up and be fully expressed in our world, with our families and everything that we're doing if we are depleted energetically if we are not taking care of ourselves. So I think that the first thing is to really honor our self by really taking care of our body and you know our health and our well-being.

A: Well... I umm... it's so interesting how people can harness that energy or that addiction to adrenaline 'coz I can definitely admit that I've been addicted to adrenaline for probably since high school and maybe even before that. Hahaha! Go down in deep... and how I harness it in ways you know through exercise umm or being obsess with what I eat or something like that but it's still... still the root cause that kind of mix everyone equal in terms of their struggles with different addictions.



T: Absolutely, absolutely because I believe that we could have compulsivities around; our appearance, around our diet, around so many different things. It's not just chemical dependency; it could be just different behavior patterns. Like you, I was very sort of getting high on the adrenaline when I was a teenager I'm in track and I played basketball all through high school and in college. And so for me as an athlete there's a certain way that I was used to orienting my mindset and it was always about not just winning but really being competitive but being competitive a lot was from me – How can I do better this time? How can I exceed my own expectations? And I think that if we don't... we don't come into some state of balance we can find ourselves being sort of being extreme with that. So I think it's cool to be competitive in one's sense but I think we can take you to a whole different level where it begins to breed sort of an attitude to scarcity or make us think that we have to be better than others. Do you see what I mean?

A: Yes I do, I do. Important topics. Now one thing I wanna talk about in playing All In because as you've just mentioned, playing All In could be very competitive. It's like – Okay, who's running behind me? You know one of my girl friends always say, "Run the race against yourself 'coz you could always be seeing who's in front of you and who's behind you." But, in terms of playing All In, what does it mean to you? ... To play All In, in a way that is not a place from scarcity?

T: Yes, yes. I think that's such a great question. So for me, playing All In... First of all every day, Alicia this is a part of my meditation... I have a meditation practice every single day. My meditation is really – How can I be of service? And how can I use my gifts, my talents and my abilities today, to be of service to others? So to me, playing All In is really about giving myself over to something that's bigger than myself and it's constantly saying 'Yes' to the universe, 'Yes' to the unfolding of my consciousness, 'Yes' to my gifts and my talents. So I believe it always started in being that state of saying 'Yes'; 'Yes' to yourself. So for me, playing All In looks like saying 'Yes' number one, it looks like taking very good care of myself so I can show it every day and be present with my clients. After I meet with you, I have clients that are coming in and I just wanna be available to them and the only way that I can be available to them is by being available to myself. So, for me that's saying 'Yes'. I'm saying it's being... it's being okay with discomfort. So I've made a decision that I decide to create wealth in my life and which is one of the reasons why I follow Laura Longmire and I believe I came to know you in your work through one of Laura's seminars if I'm not mistaken. And so, constantly learning and growing and saying, "You know, I've never done this before. I don't know what it's like to be wealthy and to make tons and tons of money but I'm willing to try and dig in and feel uncomfortable and get out of this box." Did you see what I mean?



A: Absolutely.

T: So yes, and just learning new ideas and strategies and connecting to people like yourself and others and that's to me... that's just playing All In and playing all well if you will.

A: ...and not afraid of fear, rejection, failure; all of those.

T: Not anymore. I used to be but I'm not anymore and I think that comes as we develop and we grow, we let go of the ego. I love... Gandhi used to talk a lot about the ego he says, "Let's make our ego a zero." and when you have a zero ego that you are able to do anything in the world. You're not embarrassed; you're not easily set-off by anything or other people because your ego is not a factor in this.

A: Then it's a hundred percent freedom. A hundred percent... that's how... when... going back to Martin when I was thinking his quote – "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." It's where you could be fully real when everyone in the world is looking at you... when you could just be fully real and not embarrassed and just step up and authentic and transparent. It's a powerful thing and so very freeing feeling.

T: It is and that is my wish for my sister friends, women in my life are that we get to a place in our lives where we can be that because it is so incredibly freeing. I get goose bumps by just thinking about it only because I know what my life was like when I wasn't free and when I'm struggling with body image and didn't feel like I was good enough or didn't feel this or didn't feel that and it wasn't until I made the decision to just be free and be as I am. You know... that I really felt that sense of liberation.

A: Beautiful. So Thulani, how can people find out more about you and purchase your books?

T: Yeah, so first of all my website is [thulani.com](http://www.thulani.com) and my name is spelled as T-H-U-L-A-N-I so it's www.thulani.com and the Ebooks... there's a description in my website that talks about the Ebooks and they're also available now on amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.

A: Great!

T: Can I just tell you, Alicia. So you know I've been wanting to write for the longest time, writing is a passion of mine and when I came across your information about the Bestseller In A



Weekend I said – Oh let me just try this, for I’m willing to try anything. I’ve tried so many things so let me try this Alicia Dunams woman. So I started your program and I immediately went into action, and can I just tell you... Sometimes it’s just a little... a little something that someone says that turns the light bulb on, and it was the way that you laid out how to actually start writing your chapters and your topics and that sort of thing. That when the light bulb just went off in my head and I said – Wow, I’ve been making this to be so difficult and hard. And I also think as women, I think we have the tendency to make things so hard and you know... you just can’t expect the simplicity of something. You have to sort of turn into something super difficult and what you’ve done for me, Alicia; which I’m eternally grateful is that you just helped to simplify things for me and so I’m thankful for that.

A: Well it’s an honor. Thank you for that, you’ve been so sweet and open with me and I look forward to seeing that visualization board I wanna put that on my Instagram. Hahaha

T: Yes, when I get home today I will take a picture of it. How about that? And I’ll show it to you...

A: That sounds great. So, any words of advice to leave our audience on how to play All In?

T: Yes, so play All In... Number one, by saying ‘Yes’ to yourself. If there are goals, dreams, talents that you have say ‘Yes’ to them. Do not allow anyone or even yourself to keep you from manifesting your goals. Every single person on the face of this planet has a calling, has a reason for being and when we can be quiet enough to really top into what that is; we give ourselves a sense of meaning and purpose. And so I would say to do some work and find out what that purpose is, what your passion is, what turns you on, induces you and go for it.

A: Awesome! Great way to wrap it up. Thank you so much, Thulani for playing [All In](#) today...

T: Thank you so much, Alicia.

A: Absolutely... and we’ll see you guys next time!

T: Okay, buh-bye!