

1 INSIGHT

with RICH LITVIN



Episode 1: "What's the book you are scared to write?"

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Rich Litvin: Welcome to 1 Insight. My name is Rich Litvin. I grew up in London and I now live in LA and this is a podcast for extraordinary top performers. You see, I've coached some of the most successful and talented people on the planet. I see what most people cannot see, and I dare to say what most people wouldn't dare to say. What I know about success is that on the other side of it, it can actually be lonely. You can feel like more of an impostor the more successful you become. And when you're the most interesting person in the room, you're actually in the wrong room.

Rich Litvin: I coach around insight. Life looks one way. Something happens. The world looks different and your entire world changes. It can happen in an instant. This podcast is called 1 Insight because a single insight can change everything. I think you're going to enjoy this episode. Andre's got a background. He brought a healthcare business from scratch to six figures and he built up a successful coaching business after that. He works in the health care field.

Rich Litvin: When I coach him, I don't quite get what his first question is so I dive deeper. "What do you really want?" is always the heart of what I'm asking, and I start to find out what this man is about, and then I dive deeper and I use the metaphor of writing a book as a way to coach him and we get somewhere really powerful after just a few minutes in. The power of coaching around insight is you don't need a lot of time. When they have the insight, they're there. Sometimes it's

time to take them off the hot seat, but I decided to leave Andre on the hot seat just a little bit longer and we really get there.

Rich Litvin: This is a man now who is filled with energy, ready to make a big impact in the world in a way that scares him just a little bit, which is a place I always love. Enjoy. Hi, Andre.

Andre: Hi, Rich. How are you?

Rich Litvin: I'm great. Thank you for saying yes to joining me on my podcast today.

Andre: [inaudible 00:02:27].

Rich Litvin: We call this podcast 1 Insight for a reason. In my experience, that the power of coaching is in a single insight and life is one way and then you have an insight and suddenly life is very different. So let's see, let's play, let's see what occurs in our time together. What would really be valuable for you today in our coaching?

Andre: So yeah, I think I've been chasing my tail rather over the last sort of two or three years around taking what I do as a therapist, physical therapist, energy therapist, coach, whatever And working out what my services and what's the greater thing for the world, right? That's the real big thing for me. I've been happy to build businesses and so one client at a time and the local thing, but what's my bigger mission? What's my bigger game to play? I still feel I'm still playing a little bit small.

Rich Litvin: Because you've got an interesting track record behind you. Just remind me of the things you've done in the past.

Andre: So yeah. My history, initially I was an osteopath and I built a business to being an osteopath from 2001 to about 2010, 2011 and then started to do more energy work. And so I kept on building that as well. So taking me off a lot of my physical therapy clients and some energy work. And then 2015-ish, 2016 decided to start adding coaching into there as well. And then having a hybrid of body work, of energy work, of coaching and really working with deep around mental, emotional and physical health and wellbeing. That was my big thing, but more mental and emotional. Over the last two years I've worked with a lot of people with anxiety, with stress, depression and trauma. So trauma's my big study over last eight years, is trauma.

Rich Litvin: Oh, okay. Thank you. Now it's time to narrow in a little bit more on what this is. So you had a really successful practice you brought up into a big business originally around being an osteopath-

Andre: Yeah.

Rich Litvin: -and went into more therapeutic work now, and coaching too as all part of it. Just really serving your clients, right?

Andre: Yeah. Yeah. Then that's just morphed into this more fluid thing. Yeah.

Rich Litvin: Yeah. So what would make this magical? I still haven't got a sense of... If this was a magical conversation and we got off this call and either in the minutes that followed or the months that followed or even in three years time you call me up and say, "Oh my gosh, Rich, life is amazing." What would you be telling me?

Andre: It would be the bigger mission. I think I attended one of your events, as we mentioned previously, briefed you off camera and the moon shot, I think we talked about-

Rich Litvin: Yeah.

Andre: So we talked about the moon shot and that's really what's my bigger game to play and if I was going to look back and do the old funeral and a wanted someone to speak at my funeral, what would they be saying about my contribution to the health space? Health and wellness, particularly. That's my passion.

Rich Litvin: So tell me, what would they be saying?

Andre: Almost led myself into that.

Rich Litvin: Yeah.

Andre: That I made a difference around mental and emotional health fields, that area and how people can fully integrate, not necessarily any... It's not about big trauma, but it's about the general traumatic, general life trauma that we develop and how we can go inwards and really resource ourselves to make massive changes and how I can teach that to a much broader audience than just my one-to-one.

Rich Litvin: You said something very interesting to me just then. What I heard is this. If I understand the world of trauma, I think of people who've served in the military. I think of people that have been in massive accidents. I think of terrorist situations and that's where PTSD, massive trauma. What I just heard from you is this concept of life trauma. [crosstalk 00:06:41] We're traumatized all the time. Those things our parents said to us when we were a child that impacts us decades yet later. The thing that a partner said in a relationship, an old boss, someone who bullied us when we were a kid. There's trauma in micro doses.

Andre: Yeah.

Rich Litvin: [crosstalk 00:07:00] throughout our lives.

Andre: micro trauma's a great way for... I call it a little T trauma. So trauma with a little T. Trauma with a big T is the big car crashes and the big PTSD, the war veterans. And that's very, very worthy work and people are doing amazing, amazing work in that field and that's not my field. My field is more subtle. It's working with the microtrauma, with the little T trauma and the big T when it comes up. But, it's like getting people to understand... So every day I'll hear someone say in my work, I'll hear clients say "Oh but I haven't got anything to complain about because my childhood wasn't that bad." Or, "My relationships when I was growing up weren't that bad. So I've got nothing to complain about." And yet I'm sitting here, they're sitting there, full of anxiety, full of stress, full of overwhelming, and trying to make them understand that the link back to there, it doesn't have to be an overwhelming, it doesn't have to have been significant.

Andre: Everyone [inaudible 00:07:55]. There were so many worse people in the world, but we're living our own experience, right? We're living our experience in the moment today and we can only be who we are. We can't be referencing our lives to somebody else and all these little micro things happen to us all add up to create this person that's there in front of me, and that feels to me, I feel like there's insight in there. [crosstalk 00:08:19]

Rich Litvin: What else do you hear from your clients? It was powerful when you said, "I've got nothing to complain about." It was like they were embarrassed in front of you. What else? What other things do you hear them say?

Andre: That they really should be able to get them their own way. They should be able to find their own way out of it. They've got nothing to complain about. Their childhood was good, their life has not really had any major issues and they should be able to find their way out on their own. They shouldn't need other people's support. And yet they get stuck. Particularly men, maybe more than women to a point partly. But it's still for both.

Rich Litvin: It relates to something that's been present for me for a long time. I don't need help. [inaudible 00:09:06] this idea of I don't need help.

Andre: Absolutely. And that's it. It's like my life is not... I think there's almost a guilt. We look around the world and we... News bombards us all the time and why should we complain about our lives? And then when we look at that, we feel guilty for asking for help because we think, "Oh well what have I got to complain about? Why should I... I've got to get on with this myself and work it out because there are so much other suffering around the world. How can I be so selfish as to say that my lack of connection with my mother has caused me to be difficult in relationships?" Or whatever.

Rich Litvin: I love the idea, Andre, of... I've supported so many clients who are writing a book right now. For me, the purpose of writing a book is not a book as a place to get to, as in how many copies can I sell? Will I be an Amazon best seller? Can I get on the New York Times best seller list? I'm less interested in that than what's the book you need to write? And it's the book that speaks to your clients. There's language that they're saying so that they feel this when they pick it up. Like, "Oh my God, this man is speaking to me. These are the voices in my head."

Andre: Yeah.

Rich Litvin: So you smile when I first mention a book, tell me what reaction-

Andre: Okay, so this is the [inaudible 00:10:33] things to drop into the middle of a coaching conversation. There's actually a back narrative to something that happened to me six months ago, which was that out of nowhere I developed... Well, it wasn't out of nowhere, but I developed a heart condition, which my father had had a very similar at similar age. He had had heart issues and I had this scare around my heart and the thing that came up right after that, I had some treatment and it's all good. The thing that came after that was the book, this book concept came up, which was around the heart. The heart of the father, the heart of the... I've got a daughter and the traumatic... My father was actually taken off... I live in Guernsey in the channel lines and my father was taken off the island at the age of two when the Germans occupied us, occupied the islands.

Andre: And so I felt that there was some connection with him. There was some thing that he couldn't quite fully be present for me. And I feel that, so there's a connection between these little traumas, these bigger traumas, my life. I think this heart thing, although it's partly a health thing, but I think it's also an emotional, a mental, an epigenetic link. So there was this grand vision coming out of hospital, I'm thinking, "That's the grand Opus. That's like writing a book around the heart from a male perspective, from a perspective of being a son, a perspective of being a father, a perspective of being a healer." And yeah, I can sense myself welling of that. It's like a little thing in the my chest there, in my throat. So...

Rich Litvin: Okay. Well let yourself feel it. You're feeling it in your heart right now, literally. So, that's fine.

Andre: Yeah, yeah yeah.

Rich Litvin: That's great. For me, tears are a sign of a release of emotion and there's some freedom on the other side of that.

Andre: Yeah.

Rich Litvin: And look, you said earlier, what would people say if I'd passed away? It becomes very real when you get a scare like that, right? You're suddenly very aware of your own mortality.

Andre: Yeah, yeah. And aware of the fear of your family and the fear of people around you. You get a sense of their fear for worry about yourself. And then they also get a sense of how much love there is and how much support and that in some ways jocks away some of the other concerns. You suddenly focus on what's really important. And so that's all in that narrative, that whole thing.

Rich Litvin: So let me ask you, because what my favorite question to ask after I brought in this concept of a book, can someone get in touch with it like you have, is then I ask, well let's say you'd written that book, it's done, it's complete. What's the book you'd write then? Or what's the book that it would scare you to write?

Andre: Taking ownership of my understanding of... So yeah, taking ownership of my deeper understanding of how we're born as these little energetic beings and our life experiences. I call them undigested life experiences. Undigested life experiences to never fully pass through. We never fully digested these things and they stay stuck in the body. They stay stuck in the energy system. And I have a real deep knowledge of that and how that links in with trauma and how that links in with spiritual development and how that links in with the whole piece. And I own it in secret. I own it with my groups and I own it one to one and I would be petrified of owning it out there, people saying, "Ah yeah, but on page 72 you said this and that's actually not completely correct and..." You know? So, yeah. [crosstalk 00:14:23]

Rich Litvin: Let yourself feel this, that you're feeling, that little smile on your face in this moment. So this is the one, right? And the first book you mentioned, you know how to write that one, but that's not difficult to write. Have to be the one that comes next. This is the one, and I get it. I understand. If you followed me for a while, you know that three years ago I started talking about the second book I wanted to put out there in the world. This was my book. There was no co-author to this one. This is my book about the kind of powerful people I work with, the clients I spend time with.

Rich Litvin: I was terrified because I was now thinking, "Well, my original audience might not like it and the new audience won't know it. My first books sold over 55,000 copies, so this one's never going to reach that." I got completely into my head around this. And so I speak from that experience of understanding the fear of getting this out there into the world. And this is yours. No one else can speak this.

Rich Litvin: I heard two examples of trauma. You talk about life trauma and legacy trauma.

Andre: Yeah.

Rich Litvin: This trauma that stretches back through generations, right? I remember my wife, she has a master's in spiritual psychology, had to create a family tree as part of her project and not just track back the members of her family, but the trauma in her family, the mindsets in her family. And you can track this back for generations.

Andre: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. That's part of the work I do. Yeah. Yeah.

Rich Litvin: I had this vision of a... [inaudible 00:15:46] title pops with me and initially I was thinking this title of the word guilty on the front cover. Now I'm wondering... It said the word trauma on the front cover. There's something like that that just grabs people and then you start to share your story and then there's more than one element, right? There is a place where there might be one chapter that talks about the massive trauma. You deal with this when needed, PTSD and so on. But this is a small part of this. Most of the book is about... And I love chapter titles to be the language of my people. So, My Childhood Wasn't That Bad is an awesome chapter title.

Andre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Rich Litvin: People are going to come... I thought, "Oh my God, that's me. I should be able to find my way out. I've got this. I don't need help." This is the language of your people with the chapter titles.

Andre: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's beautiful. Yeah, that really is. Yeah, that does feel great. Because the heart thing, I'm still hiding away slightly. I can write a thing that is... Yeah, it's gray and it's engaged and it's personal. Really interesting isn't, it? It's a personal story that I'll be happy to tell, but taking extreme ownership of my conceptual frameworks is difficult. That's where I put my head really out and say, "Actually, I do know something in what I'm talking about."

Andre: So it's not a personal story. A personal story is someone can't tell you you're wrong. That is my personal story. But they can tell you the challenges when you're doing something that's about something you're deeply passionate about. You have an understanding that you've never learned from books or it's just personal experience. It's learning from teachers and mentors and masters and clients. Learning from thousands and thousands of clients, you know?

Rich Litvin: So look, Andre, I said it at the beginning, before we began, the reason I call this podcast 1 Insight, is sometimes you get an insight and you're there and the temptation for a coach is to keep diving deeper and deeper. Sometimes in that moment when you're there, the best thing a coach can do is take the client off the hot seat.

Andre: Yup.

Rich Litvin: Now this is a hot seat moment and I have a couple of other thoughts behind that that I think might serve you, but I want to bookmark this moment because we're actually there. This is it. I'm not trying to coach you around this. How do we turn this into a 17 step plan? How do we get you doing this? How do we hold you accountable? I'm not an accountability coach. I say to my clients, "If you need accountability, you haven't got a mission that's important enough to you or big enough for you yet."

Andre: Yeah, absolutely. 100% agree with that.

Rich Litvin: And I sense we're there. I think I could take you off the hot seat and you've got this. Whether or not you make anything happen yet is fine. Three years into me wrestling with all the self doubt around my second book, and I'm committed this year, this is the year it's coming out. But I needed those three years. And here's the thing, here's why I'm going to keep you on the hot seat a bit longer.

Rich Litvin: I love the book by Austin Kleon called Show Your Work! I didn't sit for three years trying to either hide away in my room, write the perfect book, showing nobody until it was perfect, or sit full of self doubt and self deprecation and hideaway and do nothing. I wrote and I shared it. I have an audience, I have a blog. I talk to my clients. I send emails out to the people who follow me and my community, and I shared my insights along the way. And I got feedback and I saw what hit and what didn't. And some people liked it, some people didn't. Some of them were not my people and they drifted away. But I kept showing my work in all of its messiness.

Rich Litvin: And so when I sat down to write chapter one in January of this year, I was astounded initially because it poured out of me and then I realized, "Oh, because I've been writing it for three years." So my encouragement for you is don't try and sit in a room and get this perfect. And don't sit with all your self doubt and wondering will people like it, will people hate it? What should I do? Start sharing it. Even if it's just to your community, you've got an amazing community. Share it with them. Here are my thoughts. His version one. Here's this, and see what happens along the way.

Andre: Okay. Yeah, yeah. No and it doesn't. What it is for me, it's combining lives. It's finding my voice, because what I talk about and how I spoke about it isn't conventional and I'm not coming from a conventional... I'm mixing science and chat. A casual way taking science and trauma and spirituality and mixing them together. So it's finding that voice. And I think that's probably why I would not trust initially. I remember Will Self said, "You've got to get your first hundred thousand words out of your brain." And I think-

Rich Litvin: Yeah. I was lucky. I was told by a very successful blogger years ago when I first started blogging that almost every successful blogger he knew hated the first 50 posts and didn't find their voice until they'd written 100 posts.

Andre: Yeah. [crosstalk 00:20:57]

Rich Litvin: I smiled because it was like, "Oh great, let me just get them out of the way." If you look at the early videos, you will find them of me on YouTube. I was so nervous and insecure and now people say, "Wow you're so comfortable on camera." Well, because I practiced. And so let go of the need to edit as you write. Just write. Your voice will come. You have a powerful message and you have a powerful mission. Your voice will come along the journey. And I love, you talk about this mixture of science and chat and spirituality. That's going to make this book really unique, Andre. The insidious thing about Facebook is it's trained us to get likes and likes don't do anything. You want people who love you or people who can't stand you. Those people are gone. They're not your people.

Andre: Yeah.

Rich Litvin: [inaudible 00:21:50]. The reason my community has grown by word of mouth is the people who are not into me just slip away, and the ones who love me follow me more and more and get more involved. That's what you want. I'm not the right taste for everybody and I don't try to be. Not human and it's a very human part that I want to touch on before we finish. Throughout human history, Andre, if you spoke up, if you spoke your truth, if you put your voice into the world, someone will probably try and fight you and might kill you. Your tribe my ostracize you and then you would die. People misunderstand. When we hear this phrase that people are more afraid of public speaking than of death. No. What that means is we actually believe that if we speak in public, we'll die.

Andre: We'll die, yeah.

Rich Litvin: It's very human in our system. Talk about a legacy trauma, right?

Andre: Yeah. Absolutely.

Rich Litvin: Most of human history, you spoke up, you died. This isn't a book that's likely to end in your death. It might. It might, and I said this with my tongue in my cheek, but only slightly. In fact, I hope that some people don't like you because of this book. I hope you piss some people off because of this book. Your job is not to be liked. Your job is to put your message out there and find your people where it can really serve.

Andre: Love it. Yeah. Yeah. That's cool. Thank you, Rich. It's brilliant. Awesome.

Rich Litvin: Thank you, Andre.

Rich Litvin: For most of human history, it wasn't called coaching. It was called leadership and it's what I love to do. To coach people, to lead people and to mess with

people's thinking. If you'd like more of this, or if you'd like to learn more about our community of extraordinary top performers, go to richlitvin.com/1insight.