

1 INSIGHT

with RICH LITVIN



Episode 10: “Stop asking permission...”

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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. 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.

Hi, I'm Rich Litvin and this is my podcast, 1 Insight. I'm a coach, and the way I like to put it, I get paid to mess with people's thinking. And in this podcast I'm able to give an opportunity for you to be a fly on the wall of what happens in a powerful coaching conversation. In season one I coached people one at a time, but in season two I get to have real fun because I work with people in small groups. And I want to tell you about season two but before I begin, I want to tell you a story. Stories shift everything. They're really powerful coaching tool. They send you back to the joy of being a kid, listening to a story and stories are a doorway to insight.

You can hear a story and have an insight that changes everything. So let me tell you a story that moved me. It's a story about a woman called Jane Juska. Jane was a retired school teacher and one day she placed a small classified ad in the *The New York Review of Books*. It said, "Before I turn 67 next March, I'd like to have lots of sex with a man I like. If you want to talk first, I love to read the literature." She got lots of responses. Now there are several clever and exciting things about what she did. The medium she chose for a start. This wasn't the back pages of the magazines where you'd normally find men seeking women or women seeking men ads. It was placed in *The New York Review of Books*. You see, Jane was a retired English teacher. She loved books, and she loved reading. She wanted sex, yes, but only with intelligent men who also loved literature.

So she led the search for intelligence, dictate her media choice, not just a search for sex. And as a result, she's stood out in that media much more than she would have elsewhere. And that made her small classified ad unusual and daring. But what was really daring was that she decided to do it in the first place. You see Jane Juska was born in 1933. She grew up in a world without the pills, TV, mobile phones, rock and roll, or social media. Women back then didn't even talk about things like sex. So Jane grew up, got married, had a son and got divorced and like all divorced women of her time that was posed to be the end of her sex life. For 30 years, she worked as a school teacher, missing it occasionally, but accepting the inevitable. And then she retired, and it became obvious to her that unless she did something about it, this was going to be her future.

This was how her life would end and she decided it was now or never. And she did something to change that future. She managed to combine her passions, her love of literature, heterosexual intimacy and intelligent men. After the ad ran, she wrote a book about her experiences. It's called *A round-heeled woman* and it became an international bestseller, and it transformed her life. The title, by the way, refers to the Victorian description of a lady of easy virtue, or a woman who would lie on her back so quickly, her shoes must have round heels.

When Jane Juska placed the ad, she didn't know where it would all lead. She just knew you only get one life, and she had one last chance. Use it or lose it. She knew she had to disrupt things. She had to disrupt the inevitability of a future she did not want. You hear a lot about disruption in the media, but not much of it really occurs. We just do something slightly different. Nothing we can't predict the outcome of. What stops us being more daring is our fear of other people's opinions. Our clients, our peers, our bosses, the media, but as Jane Juska found out, public opinion doesn't really exist. We just think it does. Sure. Some people were shocked by what she did. There will always be people like that, but many more people were curious and intrigued by what she did. Many women wrote to thank her. After they read her book, they realized they weren't the only people in that situation.

This gave them the courage to transform their own lives, to live before they died. I think what she did is a great lesson, not just about sex, but about facing the fear of whatever stops us. Usually that fear is what we think other people will think. We can't be successful and confident if we try to live life with no risk. We can't be disruptive if we constantly seek permission. Imagine if Jane Juska had asked everyone their opinion before she did it. What else did you think she'd have got? Everyone would have said no and she wouldn't have done it because no one can see anything truly disruptive being successful before it's done. Only afterwards and when you're successful, everyone then agrees it was a good idea because it worked.

So our life and our work will be as exciting as we make it and actually the only person we have to worry about is ourselves, that's whose opinion is stopping us. If we can learn to ignore ourselves, we can do anything we want. I love that story. If we can learn to ignore ourselves, we can do anything we want except it's kind of challenging to be able to ignore those voices in our head. That way of being we've had for 10, 20, 30 years of our life or more. And that's the power of having a coach. That's the power of having someone who can see how you show up when you can't. That's the power of having someone in your life who's able to see the things that you cannot see and willing to say the things that most people would not dare to say. That's the power of coaching.

That story came from a book called *Predatory Thinking*, by Dave Trott. A British guy who writes about advertising. I love the power of that concept and that's what you get to experience when you listen in to the next few episodes in season two. Some of the people I coach include a man who is a former vice president at a major sports league. He's created multimillion dollar deals. One of Britain's top retailers, the chief of staff to a VP at Google who helped them grow their business past \$100 million. A finance leader for a billion dollar corporation, someone with a PhD in archeology at the age of 27 and a professional Opera singer, and actor. I love my clients. They come from every realm and yet they are very, very human.

The thing that gets in our way is this piece of our anatomy up here. It's our thinking and so join me for the next few episodes and have fun as you get to be a fly on the wall whilst I mess with people's thinking. 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, for extraordinary top performers, go to richlitvin.com/1insight.