

1 INSIGHT

with RICH LITVIN



Episode 3: The formula for Exponential Success

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Rich: Welcome to 1 Insight, my name is Rich Litvin. I grew up in London and I now live in L.A., 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 and this podcast is called 1 Insight, because a single insight can change everything.

How to be an overnight success in 20 years, this is the formula for exponential success. My wife's single Rally Call was viewed over 155,000 times in a couple of weeks and listened to tens of thousands of times on various music platforms. It's the most powerful song she's ever written. Monique's been on a journey to find and amplify her voice in order to help others find and amplify their voice for years. But I've been able to see behind the headlines to get some insights on her journey to success. What I'm about to share with you is what I first started to write about her just after her third album hit the number two spots on the iTunes' jazz charts.

Number one, creator versus creative. You see, Monique's not just a creative, she's a creator. Creatives use their imagination and their ideas to make something original in this world but creators use the power of generative language. They act without attachment, they set goals as a place to come from not as a place to get to, and they do the work no matter what. If you're a leader, a coach, an athlete, an artist, or an executive, you need to be both creative and a creator. That's simple, but not easy.

Here's the second point. Do you want to be successful fast? In less than a year, Monique wrote and performed a one-woman show that got rave reviews, won the Producers Award at the Hollywood Fringe Festival and sold out at the prestigious New York Solo Theater Festival. In that time she also wrote, performed, recorded and released her third album and it launched at the top of the charts in iTunes, all of that in a year. An overnight success, right? Well, let's find out.

Now I'm going to give you Monique's 20-step formula to be an overnight success in 20 years. Number one, love music so much as a youngster that you roller-skate in the backyard for hours at a time to amazing musicians but you're too afraid to admit out loud that you want to be a performer. Number two, get a degree in mathematics at UC Berkeley because you're afraid to study music. Number three, start a corporate career because you're afraid to be a professional musician, and number four, quit that corporate career to be a professional singer, even though everyone around you thinks you're crazy. Number five, perform for years in coffee shops to people who barely notice you exist.

Number six, hire the best musicians you can find to help you record your first album. Number seven, be proud of your music but feel terrified about getting it out in the world, and number eight, watch some of the musicians on your album go on to be super successful themselves and feel frustrated or angry that you don't know how to make that happen for yourself. Number nine, be confused by the overwhelming world of managers, publicists, social media experts and people in the business.

Number 10, travel around the world to perform in India, China, Fiji, Holland, and England. Number 11, record and release a second album but still feel overwhelmed by the business of music. Number 12, take 10 years away from your career because raising your kids becomes your number one priority. Number 13, get a diagnosis of a desmoid tumor and decide it's time to be done with hiding and playing small.

In early 2017, Monique was given the diagnosis of a desmoid tumor. Doctors told her that the best she could hope for was to take pharmaceuticals for the rest of her life and hope it stayed the same size. Second opinions recommended surgery; they need to cut out part of her abdominal wall. Now, Monique is an interesting character. She's got a Master's Degree in Spiritual Psychology and she chose to listen to her inner knowing, her intuition.

Spirit told her that she needed to ask the tumor what it was here to teach her instead of blindly following doctor's orders and she literally dialogued with the tumor. And she

heard the message that she was hiding who she was. It told her that she could no longer protect others at her own expense and it demanded that she speak her own true, authentic voice, and that's what she did. And by the way that tumor has been shrinking for the past three years.

Number 14, write a one-person show that's so deeply personal it's terrifying to put out in the world. Number 15, create an album that mines the very depth of your soul. There are four more steps and these are perhaps the most important. Five more. Number 16 pay such close attention to the voices of self-doubt and negativity that scream so loud in your head it can be hard to move. Number 17, feel a soul-sapping lack of confidence that makes it scary to even get out of bed in the morning. Number 18, be overwhelmed by crippling fear at the thought of having to keep showing up when you failed again and again and again.

Are you paying attention? These are important ones, right? Number 19, embrace the power of procrastination, it's really never so enticing to clean the entire house as the moment you want to sit down and create your art. Oh, and number 20, become a master of self-sabotage. Just when things are going great, allow fear and self-doubt to get in your way, slow you down or completely stop you from doing what you know you need to do next.

What most people never see is that like all successful people, Monique has faced roadblocks and challenges and criticism along her whole journey, it's been hard. But here's the secret. The biggest roadblocks, challenges, and criticisms you'll ever face are the ones on the inside. The writer, Steven Pressfield calls this the resistance. Most of us he says have two lives, the life we live and the unlive lived within us, between the two stands resistance.

And while I celebrate Monique today, I've witnessed her on her journey. It's been challenging, it's been filled with ups and downs. She's faced self-doubt, self-sabotage, procrastination, overwhelm, fear, and failure. And as Pressfield writes in the War of Art, "The professional has learned that success like happiness comes as a byproduct of work. The professional concentrates on the work and allows rewards to come or not come, whatever they like."

There's a beautiful book with a title After the Ecstasy, the Laundry. The day after hitting number two on iTunes, Monique heard that her application for Grammy membership hadn't met their requirements so she had to resubmit. And then we had to attend a parent-teacher meeting for one of our kids and then we had a problem with our electricity bill payment. Most people think the success is a destination, "Once I get there, I can finally relax." But I've coached some of the highest performers on the planet, from gold-winning Olympic athletes to Navy Seals, to British Special Forces operatives, to multi-million dollar business owners, and not one of them was ever ready to stop and put their feet up.

Every one of them is a testament to the fact that success simply brings higher quality problems. Every one of them continued to face struggles on their journey, every one of them carried inside a number of guilty secrets they thought they could never share with anyone. As Steven Pressfield says, "The struggle with self-doubt, self-sabotage, procrastination, overwhelm, fear, and failure is part of our journey. And it will continue to be part of our journey even after we've achieved the success we've been craving."

Do you still want to be an overnight success? I can help. Just be careful not to get seduced by the stars on American Idol or the Facebook ads that promise you a blueprint to make millions. Overnight successes are most often 10, 20, or more years in the making. Here you go. Here's a formula for exponential success. Number one, dream big. Your friends and family and community will encourage you to think small. That's okay, that's their job, they love you so they want you to stay safe, to take no risks. But nothing significant was ever created without risk so dream big. To paraphrase T.E. Lawrence, "Everyone dreams but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their mind wake in the day to find it was vanity, but the dreamers of the day are dangerous, for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible."

Tim Ferriss describes the impact of dreaming this big on achieving the impossible. He says, "It's lonely at the top." 99% of people in the world are convinced they're incapable of achieving great things so they aim for mediocre. The level of competition is thus fiercest for realistic goals, paradoxically making them the most time and energy-consuming. The fishing is best," he continues, "Where the fewest go and the collective insecurity of the world makes it easy for people to hit home runs while everyone else is aiming for base hits.

"There's just less competition for bigger goals. Realistic goals restricted to the average ambition level are uninspiring and they only fuel you through the first or second problem and then you throw in the towel. Unreasonable and unrealistic goals are easier to achieve for yet another reason, having an unusually large goal is an adrenaline infusion that provides the endurance to overcome the inevitable trials and tribulations that go along with any goal."

If you're a coach dream big and help your clients dream bigger than they've ever dreamed. Number two, take tiny steps. It's counter-intuitive but the path to big dreams is paved with tiny steps. Everyday improve yourself by 1%, every day serve one person or create one thing. Every day do one thing that makes you feel uncomfortable. I've written every day for over 12 years, I've published my writing every week for over a decade. Tiny grains are compounded, tiny gains are compounded.

As James Clear says, "Too often we convince ourselves that massive success requires massive action. We put pressure on ourselves to make some earth-shattering improvement that everyone will talk about. Improving by 1% isn't particularly notable, sometimes it isn't even noticeable, but it can be far more meaningful especially in the long run. The difference a tiny improvement can make over time is astounding. Here's how the math works out. If you get 1% better each day for one year you'll be 37 times

better by the time you're done. I know our brains as humans find it hard to understand compounding.

Number three, think long-term. Patience and perseverance are muscles you need to build. Dan Sullivan teaches entrepreneurs not to focus on what they want to do this month, this quarter, or this year, instead he impresses the importance of building a vision for what you want to create in the next 25 years. Decide on the most important things you want to accomplish in your business and your life and then decide you've got 25 years to accomplish them. Thinking so long-term frees you to dream bigger than you've ever dreamed, after all, with 25 years to accomplish them the pressure is off. And since each quarter is 1% of 25 years, you don't even have to be perfect each quarter. Take tiny incremental steps again and again, and again.

Number four, success is an inside out journey. Most of the challenges you'll face will be on the inside. It's not just your friends and family who want to keep you safe, your entire nervous system is designed to keep you alive. For most of human history, even a simple scratch could lead to your death so your unconscious mind is actively working against your dreams because your dreams aren't supposed to feel safe. To turn your dreams into reality you have to do the deep inner work because as Carl Jung said, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate."

Fear is often a master desire which makes it a compass to point us in the right direction, the direction of our dreams. Letting your fears hold you back will lead to the experience Mark Twain once described, "I'm an old man and I've known many great troubles, but most of them never happened." When you hold back from a goal you really desire, that's not self-sabotage, that's self-protection and your success lies on the other side of your comfort zone, which means success requires courage and vulnerability.

Brene Brown once said, "Vulnerability is not winning or losing, it's having the courage to show up and be seen when we've got no control over the outcome. Vulnerability is not weakness, it's our greatest measure of courage. People who weighed into discomfort and vulnerability and tell the truth about their stories, they're the real badassess." And as Winston Churchill once you said, "Fear is a reaction, courage is a decision."

Number five, keep going. One thing I can promise you on your journey to success is that you will face difficulties, delays and opposition. As it says on the inside cover of the fictional Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, "Don't panic." Persistence is a superpower. In the words of Churchill, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal, it's the courage to continue that counts." Keep going.

Number six, do the opposite. You are there product of generations of ancestors who've learned not to stand out, not to rock the boat and not to have a point of view. So most people follow the sheep formula in life and business to stay safe. The sheep formula states, "If you do and say the same as everyone else, you'll end up sounding and looking exactly like everybody else." Look, Earl Nightingale, put it almost 70 years ago, "The opposite of courage in our society is not cowardice, it's conformity." And I've lived much

of my life as a leader and a coach based on one other quote by Earl Nightingale. If you want to be successful watch what everyone else is doing and then do the opposite, the majority is almost always wrong.

Number seven, seek out an elite community. Throughout history, elite athletes, elite artists and elite performers have always surrounded themselves with other top performers. It's not being elitist, it's called a talent hotbed. To be a great, a truly great coach or leader, make it your singular mission to seek out or create a talent hotbed, I do both. Seek a community of people who scare you. Litvin's law says, "The power of a community goes up exponentially when you multiply the number of people by the power of people in that group." Your community are the holders of your dreams, your community is a safe space where you can never get too big and you can never get too messy. But here's the thing, fear doesn't go away. As Steven Pressfield said, "The warrior and the artist live by the same code of necessity, which dictates that the battle must be fought anew every day."

I'll leave the final words to Monique who has needed so much courage to deal with the tumor, raising two kids, creating a best-selling album, writing an award-winning show and being married to me. To do all of this she tapped into the pain and the power of her ancestors, everyone who had traveled the world before her. In Monique's words, "There's a line in my song, Rally Call, 'My body is broke, my spirit is tired.' As I think about the courage I needed to share this song I think about all the people before me, that's what keeps me going." Keep going, you've got this. And if you want to watch Monique, put Monique DeBose into YouTube or any of the apps that listen to music, she's written her most powerful stuff yet in the last few months.

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.