

Disrupt Yourself Podcast

EPISODE 177: LIVINGSTON TAYLOR

Welcome to the Disrupt Yourself podcast. I'm Whitney Johnson. Here we discuss strategies and advice on how to climb the S Curve of Learning™ in your career and life, which means disrupting who you are now to slingshot into who you want to be.

We talk with a lot of hard-core disruptors on our show, entrepreneurs, corporate whizzes, academics, blazing new thought trails and S Curves, but not all disruptors are so obvious. Today, we're taking some time to settle into a conversation with American singer, songwriter, musician, teacher and author Livingston Taylor, I've asked him to join us because I read his book and it's been invaluable to me as I've been climbing my S Curve as a speaker.

It's called stage performance and he wrote it for his students at Berklee College of Music. In it, he taps into a deep and profound understanding about performing and the emotions around that. What it takes for us to communicate our ideas to others, whether on stage or in the boardroom.

He makes a brilliant and unexpected observations, including what it's like to be James Taylor's brother. Yeah, that James Taylor is his brother. He's been on Billboard's top 100 three times and top 40 three times. He's performed with the greats, including Jimmy Buffett, Joni Mitchell, Fleetwood Mac, Jethro Tull, and he maintains a full concert schedule now performing live weekly for online audiences. Livingston Taylor, thank you so much for joining us

Livingston Taylor: Whitney, so nice to speak with you, excellent, thank you for having me on your podcast and I'm delighted.

Whitney Johnson: Because this interview is, in effect, a performance and you are an expert in this area, what I'd like for us to do is set the stage with what is a performance to you and what do you do at the start of every performance?

Livingston Taylor: It's a very, very good question. A performance is what we do all day, every day, virtually everywhere. Always we are walking, and we are seeing our surroundings, we're adjusting our postures, our movement, our dress, our words to the environment that we're in to the people that were in. The assumption of

performance was that it was somebody going on stage or in front of a group of people or in front of a court room, I get a lot of lawyers in my course and the idea of sort of spewing something out there and hoping that it will stick. But actually, as I say to my students, and I didn't expect to get this deep in so quickly, but what we go on stage when we're doing it right, we go on stage not to be seen, but to see. We make music, we speak not to be heard, but to hear, to use phrases that allow us to listen. To speak with the slowness and a clarity that allows us to watch our vision land. And if somebody needs to jump in quickly and interrupt you, well, that's OK. We'll just wait because we don't want to put it out there until we're ready to have it received, until we're ready to watch it land.

Whitney Johnson: All right, I think I am ready to receive. So, where did you grow up?

Livingston Taylor: I was born in Boston, my mother, a homemaker, and she was from Newburyport, Massachusetts, and her father was a fisherman in a boat builder and he ran a fish store. And he was a really a jack of all trades, very handy fella. And my father came from North Carolina, Morganton, North Carolina. And he went to eventually he was at Harvard Medical School and did his residency at Mass General, where he met my mother. And then my father had gone to the University of North Carolina and he returned there to eventually become the Dean of the medical school at UNC. And so we were raised in Chapel Hill. My parents always wanted us to be observant, to watch, to see what's going on around us, stick up our finger and read up where the wind's coming from. Where is it blowing? I'm 69 years old. Born in 1950. And I was raised in a time Whitney, where a parental involvement wasn't that intense.

Whitney Johnson: You've said that your parents, were you know, your dad was a doctor. Your parents moved back to North Carolina. They were willing to let you roam, to let you explore. Tell us a little bit about your mother.

Livingston Taylor: One of the most vivid memories I have of my childhood, again, we were raised in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and it's hot in Chapel Hill in the summer, hotter than the hinges of southern hell. And I was a young fella, maybe six years old, something like that. And I was hot, and I went to my mother and I said, "I want to build a swimming pool." Now, having an inkling that building an entire swimming pool as a six-year-old might be difficult. I studied my mother's face intently as I asked the question. Because I was looking for that hint of incredulity of you can't do this or bemusement. And to my amazement, there was absolutely not. She simply asked me a question where would you build the swimming pool? At which point I said, "Well, I'll build it in the front yard." And she pondered a second and then she looked at me and said, if I were you, I'd build it out back in the field. And I went and I got a shovel. Oh, I don't know, I may be dug a half a shovel full of dirt. Obviously, it's an impossible task digging through that snarly southern grass that would populate a wild field. Anyhow, the memory that's so clear to me was how seriously she took my request and how seriously she took me.

Whitney Johnson: I love that. Is there an experience, as you think about as you go through your life, where that, that, your mother not looking at you with bemusement, not looking at you credulous and just saying, why don't you build in the field, in the backyard? Has there been moments in your career or your life where that voice or that experience has come to mind, where you said, I'm going to go do this and you thought, you know, I can do this because my mother thinks I can do this?

Livingston Taylor: I don't know what it is Whitney, but my arrogance is absolutely supreme. For instance, three years ago I was thinking about two of the greatest challenges that face the human condition. One is nuclear war, nuclear proliferation, highly problematic, and the other is global warming. And global warming is the result of burning hydrocarbons. And one of the thoughts that I had was does the fissioning of uranium 235 or 239 both isotopes of uranium, do either of those of this fusion in uranium 235, can you substitute it for burning coal? And I realized that I didn't know anything about uranium. And so, I've had absolutely wonderful time studying nuclear physics and learning what this is and where it came from and why we did it and why we have uranium 235 and 239 instead of thorium 233, 232. All these other related questions, if you have a facile and a curious mind, this is where you go.

And my mother's support of me allowed me to believe that I can think about anything and I can have thoughts about them. Not necessarily right thoughts, but investigative thoughts.

Whitney Johnson: Right, you can figure things out.

Livingston Taylor: Well, I can tell you that my mother liked my brain and I like my brain. I wake up pretty early. I tend to wake up around five thirty in the morning, five o'clock, five thirty. I like waking with first light and just listening and just it to me, it's so much fun because I said, gee, I wonder where my brain's going to go that day and off we go on some adventure.

Whitney Johnson: Yeah. I love that statement of my mother liked my brain and I like my brain. And I also love that you said you wake up and say, where are we going to go today? That's just so, so encouraging. And I love the enthusiasm behind that. And so, one of the questions. So, let's yes. So, we've come forward. Let's go back now for a few minutes. Did your parents ever want you to become a doctor?

Livingston Taylor: We were left to our own devices very much that I found. Music was fine with my parents. It was fine that James and I were drawn in that direction at a time when there was a real rising tide in the late 60s around music and it lifted all ships. And James and I were two of those ships.

Whitney Johnson: Just talk briefly about some of your early musical influences. Who are some people that really influenced you?

Livingston Taylor: There were a number of different inputs. First, we had an older brother named Alex and Alex, he was our oldest brother. Sadly, he died in the early 90s. He was alcoholic and he died of a lethal dose of alcohol. And -

Whitney Johnson: That must have been hard.

Livingston Taylor: - believe me, he's sorely missed.

Livingston Taylor: That notwithstanding, when we were kids, Alex would bring home, he'd bring home rock and roll. He was bringing home Elvis Presley and Bobby Blue Bland and Ike and Tina Turner and the Swan Silver Tones. He was bringing in all these African American sounds and R&B sounds blues. He was a great blues singer. My parents were bringing in show tunes all the time. There was a lot of Rodgers and Hart, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Lerner and Loewe those great Broadway albums. And they they were blaring in our house. Both my parents loved to sing, and my father was a very good singer. Also, there was Woody Guthrie. There was that folk contingent was also very active. As I got into my early teens, 11, 12, 13, we were coming to Martha's Vineyard Island in those days and there was a very active folk scene on Martha's Vineyard. And so I was listening to Tom Rush and Joan Baez, Judy Collins, the Kingston Trio, Peter Paul and Mary. Yeah, there was a lot of music around.

Whitney Johnson: Quite an eclectic group, the folk, the rock and roll, the blues, the the show tunes. And so, all of those were going into your, your young brain and influencing you as both a musician and a songwriter.

Livingston Taylor: Yeah, no question. A lot of Burt Bacharach, Hal David, sung by Dionne Warwick, "walk on by..." And I loved the focus and the discipline. Gosh, I do love highly disciplined tonality.

Whitney Johnson: Ah, so when you say you love highly disciplined tonality, give us an example of that. Something that's on your brain that people would be familiar with. So they know what your, you mean when you say that.

Livingston Taylor: All right. Well, I'm going to pick up my guitar right now.

Whitney Johnson: Oh, even better.

Livingston Taylor: Let me play. Now, this is from a play that opened on Broadway 1951 called The King and I, written by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. It's a song that you've heard many times, but I just want you to hear as I play it, simply how beautifully assembled it is when they would write...

"Getting to know you, getting to know all about you

Getting to like you, getting to hope you like me
Getting to know you, putting it my way, but nicely
You are precisely, my cup of tea
Getting to know you, getting to feel free and easy
When I am with you, getting to know what to say
Haven't you noticed, suddenly I'm bright and breezy
Because of all the beautiful and new, things I'm learning about you day by day"

Whitney Johnson: Ok, I'm crying.

Livingston Taylor: Yeah, and it does it does feel like it makes me cry. It's so incredibly beautiful. But let's think about that song for just a second, if you don't mind. What happens. Let's think about I say to my students all the time, it is possible for you to write a song at 12 noon, be finished that song by 1:00, be recorded that song by 1:30 and by 1:45, you can post that song and it is now available literally to four billion people. When you get seven likes, you actually think this has been impactful. And no, it hasn't been impactful, seven likes do not a career make. So, there was Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein in 1950 and they were writing together and they had already written Oklahoma and Carousel. And their output had been unbelievable and before anybody heard that song. So, two masters wrote it, but before it ever fell on an audience's ears, it had been heard by producers, by directors, by knowledgeable people who twisted it and shaped it, and formed it until it was together and it was perfect. So just because you can post something doesn't mean you should. It takes time to get it right. And the problem with the Internet, with email, with texting is it allows us to open our mouths and expose ourselves long before we're ready to.

Whitney Johnson: Wow, just because you can post something doesn't mean you should.

Livingston Taylor: As I am fond of saying to my students, they will never accept your passion until they are held by your discipline. We and the discipline that requires the restraint that is required to be truly impactful is so important.

Whitney Johnson: I'd like to just put a bow on, on that. You talked about discipline, tonality, can you just describe what you meant when you said that when you played getting to know you?

Livingston Taylor: It's a very simple song to play. That it is simple in chords and in melody does not mean that it didn't require a lot of work to learn the song.

And the reason why it makes you cry, and by the way, makes me cry, too, is that it's we're so safe in the discipline that were then free to let go. So if your listeners are out there and they have a vision, they have something that they need people to hear, that they need their co-workers or their superiors in a bureaucracy to hear and understand, it really has to be presented beautifully and you have to finish your work. You cannot present it sloppy because people all the time will say, oh, oh no, I can hear it. Just send it to me. I'll know what you mean. No, they won't. Never. You have to finish your vision all the way to its conclusion. And then you have to present it well. Again, all of this requiring discipline.

Whitney Johnson: I love it. Safe enough within your discipline, so they're free to let go. Is that what you said?

Livingston Taylor: That's basically what I said, yes. That you want again, once they are held by your discipline, then they can enter safely your passion. And that's what tonality and time do, when I play, and I, by the way, in tune, when I play those chords, you've heard those tones literally a million times [guitar strums]. And each note is played cleanly and clearly, if it's sloppy, I don't play it. And if it's sloppy, I practice it enough, so it is no longer sloppy, but

this is hard stuff to do. I'm a passionate guy. I run off on incoherent tangents all the time. I guess you're sort of noticing that. The great thing about music is that it does align my life.

Whitney Johnson: All right. So, what I'd like to do now then is a bit of a call and response. So, I, I pulled some quotes from you, many of which are from your book, and then ask you to riff on those quotes. And you can either share the why, you can tell a story, or you can play music, whatever comes to your mind. I'll just, I'll do the call and then you respond. I've got a few of them and we'll see, we'll just see where it goes.

Livingston Taylor: Okay. Sounds great.

Whitney Johnson: So, here's the first one. "If I'm driven by adrenaline, we might miss each other."

Livingston Taylor: Oh, oh, that's it. This is in reference to nervousness. And I'm fascinated by nervousness and one of the reasons why we get nervous speaking in front of a group or giving a résumé or any of these things. Getting up in front of a group of people and presenting your vision, the reason why we get nervous in that circumstance, Whitney, is that we are fearful that what we are presenting will not justify the interruption of other people's lives. Presenting your vision is a stunning act of hubris. For you to have your podcast and say, I want you listeners to pay attention and listen to what I think is valuable and I'm going to bring to you. It's a stunning act of hubris. Now you do it because for a variety of reasons. We do it because we need to do it. The problem is that our fear that we may not, our content may not justify the interruption in people's lives. And they will be angry with us. They will say, how dare you do this? One-time years ago, somebody said to me, the audience wants to like you. And I thought about and said, no, they don't, they want you to leave them alone. They've already got a life and it's a good life. They don't need your vision. They have already had plenty of visions presented to them. One of the things my students say is that, oh, I love the energy of adrenaline. But so often the people that you're looking to reach, the ones who were already drunk and out there dancing. That's not the ones that I'm looking for. I'm looking for the ones that are standing behind other people. And they're watching and they're watching me on stage and they're wondering, is there any relief here for me? And if I'm adrenaline fueled and driven, involved in the frivolity of the drunks near the stage, the ones who have already bought in for whatever reason, that's fine, but I've got them anyhow. I'm interested in looking in and through and around and seeing that person in the back. And then they all look at me and I'll look at them and go and nonverbally, of course, and I'll say, Yeah, I got you, you're all right, I got ya. And then they'll step out slightly because they know. They're ready to be seen by me, and it's a very beautiful thing. Gosh darn it, Whitney, the problem that people don't understand is that you don't drag people along. Your success is based on the weakest person, not the strongest, the weakest person in the group. The entire group must be lifted, and they must be lifted as a collective, you are as strong as the weakest person in your group, period. And this notion that your enthusiasm, your adrenaline, your energy would drag the most fearful along? Never. You are as strong as the weakest link in your chain.

Whitney Johnson: I can picture you and in my mind's eye on stage, and probably, like you said, all life's a stage, is continually inviting people into your world, inviting them into how you see the world, your perspective on the world, and you keep coming back to this idea observation. So, I want to share another quote with, with you that really moved me as well. So, this is, "I cannot express my gratitude enough to my brother James for allowing me to live in his shadow where I'm able to observe life without being observed."

Livingston Taylor: Well, it's not that I have no fame, but I certainly do not have fame on the level of James Taylor. I love it when people will say to me about about my beautiful brother James, it's as though he got the brass ring and I didn't. And he and I both know I got the brass ring. I'm able to observe at very high levels because I'm James Taylor's brother and I don't have to be observed. It is James, has to live in that bright, bright spotlight all the time. It's exhausting. Oh, I don't want it. I've never wanted it. I love access and observation. I hang out with some very, very high powered, high level human beings, and it's just so much fun.

Whitney Johnson: Yeah, I love that just the way you said you're able to observe life without being observed. And how you talked about at the very beginning of our conversation that your parents always encouraged you to observe other people and, and to be a great songwriter, I think you probably have to be good at observing.

Livingston Taylor: The problem with fear and adrenaline is that when you are nervous, and this is what I say to my students, when you are nervous, you are thinking about yourself. Trust me, they're paying you to think about them. There's one thing that I say to my students all the time. Three things you must never be. Sick, tired or busy. Because what people want from you is for you to look at them and go, I'm completely rested. I've never felt better in my life. And I have all the time in the world for you. What can I help you with?

Whitney Johnson: Let's go to the last quote, "Wait for the moment in time, that is the beat with grace and dignity."

Livingston Taylor: There is a time to hit. There's a time to hit the notes, so. And you can, you've got that "ta, ta, ta, ta". One of the things that happens with me when I play this, my time is internalized, by the way, something your listeners might think about when they're getting a talk, or a lecture is to be in time. So, you got the "ta, ta". And you can practice, your talk, with a metronome or you can have that go back and forth. And then when you hear a great speaker, when you hear a Martin Luther King or a Barack Obama or a Franklin Roosevelt, they sing to you. "November seven, 1941, a day that will live in infamy." He's singing to you, Barack Obama. one of the things that saddens us about Donald Trump is that he doesn't sing to us. We want to be sung to so badly. Hold me, rock me, sing me a lullaby. That's what wan- we all know what we need to do and where we need to go. And what a we, listen, you know that to lose weight, what you need to do is exercise and stop eating. What we want our leaders to do, is to acknowledge how much we hurt. To wrap their arms around us and sing to us softly. And Barack, so good at it, FDR was so good at it. Who else is, is a terrific speaker? Actually, my liberal friends hate it when I see this, but Mike Pence is a very, very fine speaker. You can, if you get over being irritated with what he says or given your political affiliation. Yeah, people ask me all the time who I support, and I just look at them and I go, I'm sorry. I tend to like them all. I think it's I think it's very difficult to run for office and successfully doing it is a real accomplishment and is worthy of admiration. There's competition for those jobs.

Whitney Johnson: Are there any women that you find that are great? I mean, you you've mentioned a few people that you feel like sing you a lullaby as a speaker. Are there any women that come to mind?

Livingston Taylor: Well, obviously, Kamala Harris has a beautiful, soft delivery. Elizabeth Warren when she's not panicked that she may not be enough or that she won't get through when, when she is not panicked, she is very compelling. I really like Nancy Pelosi as well. She's very maternal and she doesn't, she doesn't speak, she has a halting speech. But she is, generally, I love at the end of her phrases, she goes to a place of joy all the time. And great leaders when they are at rest, a great leader, is generally in a place of joy. I really love people who are joyful and naturally joyful.

Whitney Johnson: I love that,

Livingston Taylor: You know, who are joyful at rest. So, I catch them unawares. They're in a state of joy.

Whitney Johnson: Oh, that's so good. And it's so fascinating to hear you analyze speakers as if when they're speaking, they're delivering music. That is fascinating.

Livingston Taylor: Oh, it's so important. We need to be held. We need we, we need our president sing as a lullaby. George Bush, George Bush, 43, was never better in his entire presidency, then he was as he stood on the rubble of the World Trade Center and he spoke to us there. And we were so freaked out and we needed him to be a terrific speaker, and at that point he was.

Whitney Johnson: All right, so we're in the homestretch. I wanted to ask you.

Livingston Taylor: That's too bad, I'm loving this

I know, I know it's very sad. But, so in our work, we talk about the curve of learning in your life. Where are you on yours?

The s curve and I've read a bit about your conceptualization of that Whitney, and I think it's very insightful. Once again, all of this is predicated on observation and sometimes it's OK to be down. Sometimes it's OK to feel poorly

about yourself. I remember many decades ago I stopped drinking alcohol. Alcoholism ran in my family, and I was having inklings that I had gotten the family disease. So, I stopped drinking. I stopped drinking at 39. And I was feeling very depressed and out of sorts, and I went to see a counselor. And the counselor said to me, he said to me, "Well, I think you're depressed, and I think we ought to put you on anti-depression medication," at which point I said back to him, "Why shouldn't I be depressed? I messed up my life. I'm a chemical soup. My body's trying to readjust to not being those things. And I trying to figure out who would want to be." The great thing about being depressed is that it allows you to sit in a still place for until your energy renews. Until you see a way forward. It is not bad news to rest for a while to be still. Don't worry. Now, if you are depressed, where you are suicidal, where you can't get out of bed, where you can't feed or care for yourself, that's a very different thing. And that, of course, requires intervention. But to be down for a few days, hey, that's your body. Sorting it out, figuring it out. Very, very important to not be too hard on ourselves.

Whitney Johnson: There's always that potential then, that while you're depressed, it can potentially be a mechanism to require you to be still so that you can re-establish control of your life and the direction that you want to take it. So that's an interesting thread I'm pulling through as I'm hearing you talk.

Livingston Taylor: To me, that represents that early time in your S curve.

Whitney Johnson: Interesting. OK, that's where you were going. Got it.

Livingston Taylor: Yes.

Whitney Johnson: Fascinating.

Livingston Taylor: And then you, you reassess, things start going well up you go. You're in the groove, it's clicking, things are going well. They never stay there. And so, it's very important to enjoy the ride. I let me tell you one of my favorite things to do. Occasionally I will give a suggestion to a student that will improve them dramatically.

One of the things I love to do is when I've done that, I then drape myself over a few seats in the class and at the top of my lungs, I proclaim, "I am the greatest teacher in the history of the world!" And my students are just freaked out by this. And then I let that I just let them hang for three or four seconds. And then I lift up my head and I'll look at them, and I'll say, "Do you ever feel that way about yourselves?" And they smile and nod that they do. And then I say, "It feels pretty good, doesn't it?" And they go, Yeah, it does. And then I well, I wind it up by looking at them and saying, "Don't worry, the feeling will pass soon enough

Whitney Johnson: Oh, that's the top of your S curve, right?

Livingston Taylor: And then you go to the top of that, your beautiful S-curve where it's all clicking and you have that moment when you think I am the best administrator, I have the best broadcast ever. And they... Listen-- these are wonderful ways to feel about yourself. And as I'm fond of saying, enjoy it, because that feeling is going to pass soon enough.

Whitney Johnson: So where can people find you, and what do you have coming up that you're excited about? So, if people are like listening in, they're saying, OK, I, I want to know more. You have kindly agreed, by the way, to everyone who's listening, he is going to give five autographed copies of stage performance to five of you, our lucky listeners. So that's one thing. But if people are like, I want to know more, I want to learn more, I want to engage more, how can they find you?

Livingston Taylor: I have something I call the Livingston Taylor show. And that's on Facebook at four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon. And I thought about how I was going to go out and find and see my beautiful audience and who I need desperately. Make no mistake, the depth of my insecurity requires that I attempt to be loved by everybody in the known universe. That said, if you have a show, the first thing you have to have is a theme song. You're ready for my theme song?

Whitney Johnson: Yes.

Livingston Taylor: Here it comes. [guitar plays] It's the Livingston Taylor show. It's the Livingston Taylor show. You never know where it's gonna go. It's the Livingston Taylor show. Is he wrecking in a car, is he crashing in a plane? Does he even understand that the desert beats the rain? He casually eccentric or actually insane? What stork brought up this brain? It's the Livingston Taylor show. It's the Livingston Taylor show. We're out of time we've gotta go, it's the Livingston Taylor show.

Whitney Johnson: Oh, yeah, so good. That's what people can find you. 4:00 p.m. on Tuesdays on Facebook. All right, you've said a performance is a conversation. So, given the conversation that we've just had, what would you like to play to end our conversation?

Livingston Taylor: I would like to address a thought that I've had for a while. There's a phrase where there's life, there's hope. And I've thought about that for a while. And I wondered if we didn't, in fact, have that backwards. That hope is such a universal engine. That it is possible perhaps that life was created, to manifest hope. Hope being the highest place of joy for not only homo-sapien, but all life. So, I'm going to end with a song called Never Lose Hope. It's a fairly simple lyric Whitney... And I started to write this song, Never lose Hope with such enthusiasm, not realizing just how much hope I was going to need to think I could rhyme the word hope through an entire song.

You can do it 'till the dream comes true

You can do it 'till the sky goes blue

I know it's dark

But in your heart

There's a light that will see you through

Here's a melody to help you cope

Even when you're at the itty-bitty end of your rope

Jump up, join in again

Shoulders up, stick out your chin

Elbow grease and soap

Never lose hope

The new year starts tomorrow

The past had done its worst

No need to hide

The world's so wide

Water for your thirst

Even Boston lost its curse

Saddle up and start to ride

Giddy-up you've found your stride

Gallop away on this beautiful day

It was all inside

You toughed it out and made it through

And you stayed true to you

You're on the other side

You left behind your foolish pride

Your name's in the envelope

Never lose hope, never lose hope.

When we set up this interview, I asked Livingston if he would be willing to perform for us, it's such an integral part of his story. But as we heard for him, performance isn't just taking the stage. As he sees it, we're all offering out performances all the time. How we present ourselves and our ideas is in fact, a performance. That pitch to your boss, a performance. Speaking up during a Zoom meeting, a performance. And when we think about our interactions like that, we start to pay attention to notice how our ideas land. The best way to make sure our ideas resonate is to be prepared. Practice and control, as he called it, disciplined tonality, it gives your audience a safe place to experience your passion. If you're overly excited or panicked, adrenaline fueled about an idea, the idea gets lost in that. For that matter, I loved how he put it. Passion is not wisdom or intelligence. Take a beat before you respond on social media, release a product or performance online, or even craft an email. Again, it comes back to practice and prepare disciplined tonality. I also found fascinating his observation that downtime, even a period of despondency, has been important to his S curve of learning. It reminds me of a quote that I love from Robert Bly and Marion Woodmen, they said. For thousands of years, a powerful voice was a mark of personhood, the longer the person stayed in the underworld, the more powerful the voice. Finally, I appreciated Livingston's tribute to his mother. That she gave him a safe place that has in turn allowed him to make a safe place for us, just lovely. If you want to see him perform live, he's on Facebook at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. His book is called Stage Performance.

And if you want to learn more about his story, watch the documentary on Amazon, aptly named "Livingston Taylor, Life is good." Thank you again to Livingston for being our guest. Thank you to our team, Jennifer Brotherson, Sarah Duran, Whitney Jobe, Virginia Kivlighan, Melissa Rutty and Nancy Wilson. I'm Whitney Johnson, and this is Disrupt Yourself.