

THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

Worksheet for Cal Fussman | How to Ask Big Questions for Big Answers (Episode 52)

Leading with a question that goes to the heart instead of the head is getting to what the person is passionate about. Maybe it's about Harry Potter books; maybe it is about one of your seven children. This is how you get to the soul.

Award-winning journalist, writer, speaker, sommelier, and now podcaster, Cal Fussman joins us for [episode 52](#) to talk about asking the right questions, listening, interviews versus conversations, and what the common theme of success was in interviews with all of the icons of the 20th century.

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Am I Done Yet? Am I Done Yet? Am I Done Yet?

As a writer you can go back and edit your work again and again until every small piece is perfect and nothing is out of place. If your mood changes, you can edit the piece again. And again. And again. Ad infinitum. Cal explains that you get a feeling when it is done -- a confirmation of sorts that it is finished.

What processes for you never seem to be complete? What are the feelings that identify when you are done with something? Find a creative task (writing an article, composing music, producing a video) and work until you get that feeling. Write down here or in your journal how it made you feel when it was done.

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Girls and Trains

One of Cal's formative experiences was to travel in Europe looking for empty seats on trains next to people who looked interesting enough that, by the end of the trip, he would go home with them. He never sat next to the pretty girls as he never felt they would take him home. The conversations led to experiences that glued all of the parts of the trips together.

The next time you are on the train/bus/plane, have a conversation with somebody who looks like they would have a good story. Don't let headphones intimidate you. Try it again the next day and the next until you have done it for five days in a row. Note your results here or in your journal.

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The Dirt Gets In Your Eyes

A four-year-old child has the ability to ask his parents 400 questions a day, but that curiosity is dampened once the child starts to attend school. He is not encouraged to ask questions but answer them and, by the time he becomes an adult, he is embarrassed to ask question even when he does not understand. The consequences of asking the wrong questions at the wrong time inhibits our curiosity so we don't communicate as fully as we could by the time we're grown up.

Play the dinner game Cal suggests in the podcast. You and two of your friends will host a dinner where each friend is required to bring somebody that the others do not know. Get to know one of these new people by asking questions about their hometown as if you were moving there and want to better understand the area. What is the best part of town for someone in your walk of life? Where are good places to shop? What is there to do on date night? Which schools do they recommend? Note your results here or in your journal.

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A Little Bit of Head/Heart/Soul

Many times we ask questions that can be answered with only a person's head and we aren't interested in listening to their answer. We could be thinking of the next question, we could think we already know what their answer will be, or this could be so routine it doesn't ultimately matter. Cal leads with questions that go to the heart -- that find what a person is passionate about. The heart leads to the soul and when the soul opens, it becomes a conversation and not an interview.

In your next conversation with friends, don't ask a question that can be answered with something from their head. Find out what they are interested in and ask them questions about that. Listen to their responses and riff from there. Let the conversation be natural and flow with no preconceived ideas. Note your results here or in your journal.

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Honing the Storytelling Craft

The worst thing you could do is ask Cal for a list of the questions he asks the people he has interviewed. It doesn't work like that; each individual requires a different set of questions and you can't follow a script. However, the storytelling after the interview does follow guidelines. It starts in the construction, and has a beginning, middle, and end. There has to be some kind of vulnerability on the part of the storyteller, and it needs to push people to the edge of their seats wondering, 'How is this going to end?'

Take a recent experience you had (a vacation, a chance encounter with an old friend, interesting conversations with strangers you did for five straight days) and construct the story around it. Craft the narrative with a beginning, middle, and end. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable. Don't lie, but create it in a way that pushes people to the edge of their seat. Create a video of yourself doing this and post it in [The Jordan Harbinger Show Facebook group](#).

Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here](#).

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About



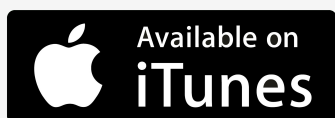
Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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