

# THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

## Worksheet for Mike Rowe | The Way I Heard It (Episode 264)

Are you unsure how you should feel when you spot a straight-talking blue collar guy in a flannel sipping a cappuccino? Are you alarmed by the skyrocketing costs of the higher education you've been sold into believing your kids will need in order to make something of themselves? Does the bromide of "follow your passion" give you more of an ulcer than a pillow of comfort? Are you hesitant to make yourself heard on the Internet (or even real life) for fear of being shut down by some know-it-all blowhard who can't resist telling you how wrong you are?

On this episode we talk to [Mike Rowe](#), the host and narrator known for his work on *Dirty Jobs*, *Somebody's Gotta Do It*, *The Way I Heard It Podcast*, and *Returning the Favor*, and the author of *The Way I Heard It*. We discuss everything from the vertigo-inducing debt of higher education to multi-millionaire plumbers to the purity of first takes to the idea-stifling side effects of correction culture.

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## Cognitive Dissonance We Need

The expectations we have of how other people should behave are often based on very surface-level impressions. For instance, I admit I was taken aback when I saw blue collar Mike graciously accepting a hoity toity cappuccino during our interview. In an era when anyone in the spotlight is overly conscious of preserving their “brand,” it was a refreshing reminder that preserving one’s humanity is ultimately more important.

“Don’t you think that that kind of cognitive dissonance is exactly what the country needs right now, rather than people completely embracing their own trope?” Mike said. “We seem so anxious as a country to put everybody into their own category. If you see a guy in a flannel shirt who you recently saw castrating lambs and crawling through sewers having a cappuccino, wait a second, something must be wrong here. He must be a fraud because nobody would crawl through a sewer and have a cappuccino! We ought to be skeptical of things that make us look twice, but we’ve just become utterly cynical now with everything.”

**Does it surprise you that Mike Rowe wouldn’t turn down a cappuccino? What if it were accompanied by quiche? Think about the perceptions you have of people and why discovering seemingly contradictory things about them is sometimes challenging to your beliefs. As human beings, we’re usually more complex than we appear on the surface. Turning this around, what do you do that might shake up the image others have of you?**

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## The Tide of Correctiveness

We all make mistakes. But the more public our platform, the greater the number of people there are waiting in the wings to correct us if we're wrong. I'm grateful that most of the listeners of this show are understanding and err on the side of gentle correction, but there are definitely a few who really like to prove me wrong — and ensure everyone knows they were the ones to do it.

“[There's] Like this giant sort of spasm of correction where everybody all of the time now is armed with this thing and access like 99% of all the information in the world, except that all the information of the world contradicts itself, too,” says Mike. “So we are just completely obsessed with voicing an opinion, offering proof that our opinion is correct, offering backup from sources that may or may not be real. No one knows anything...It's just amazing the absolute heft — the tide of correctiveness.”

**In what ways have you encountered this tide of correctiveness either online or in real life? Perhaps you catch yourself contributing to this tide (don't feel bad — it happens to us all sometimes). For anyone who creates or contributes to the escalation of such a tide, I might point to [episode 211 with Arthur Brooks: How Loving Your Enemies Can Save America](#) for guidance.**

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## Don't Follow Your Passion

On Dirty Jobs, Mike discovered that a good number of people willing to do the jobs nobody else wants to do are passionate about these jobs and prosperous, but they don't usually arrive there by following that passion. Instead, their passion follows them and allows them to fulfill a need that exists. A prime example of this progression can be heard in [episode 175 with Brian Scudamore: How Failure Can Be Your Key to Success](#), in which we learn the origin story of 1-800-GOT-JUNK and how it became a company as passionate about its people as it is practical about its purpose.

“If you confuse the cause with the symptom — as I believe we’ve managed to do in a thousand different ways — then we are going to be led by something other than practicality, opportunity, and common sense,” says Mike. “We’re going to be led by hopes, dreams, desire, and passion, and those things are too important to be without, but too fickle to follow around.”

**If you're charting a course for your own future, what's your compass: airy but aimless passion or focused pragmatism? Do you have the solution to a problem that others find valuable, or are you just crossing your fingers and hoping the right pieces will fall into place to make your dream job come true? Which approach seems more likely to produce results?**

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## The S.W.E.A.T. Pledge

Mike doesn't believe that college and the careers that require advanced degrees are useless, but he does think the narrative that aims young people in this direction as the only way to make something of themselves is underserving society as a whole. Sure, we need doctors and engineers, but we also need plumbers and welders. To address this educational disparity, he started the mikeroweWORKS Foundation to give trade school and apprenticeship scholarships to people who are willing to do the less glamorous — but potentially fulfilling and profitable — jobs that need to be done.

“Part of our work ethic scholarship requires people to sign a [S.W.E.A.T. Pledge](#),” says Mike. “A S.W.E.A.T. Pledge is a thing I wrote eight years ago after some beer, 12 points that basically I believe would help any employee do well on the job. And also, I believe any employer would absolutely love to have. It was just like a statement of purpose. It stands for Skills and Work Ethic Aren't Taboo.”

**Take the time to look over the 12 tenets of the S.W.E.A.T. pledge [here](#). Do you agree with them, or are there any that give you pause? Would you sign it? Would you allow your child to sign it? Why or why not?**

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

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## About



Join us as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers – from legendary creators 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 valuable insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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