

Ep315 Dropping the Mic with Mike Ganino

[00:00:00] **Vicky:** [00:00:00] Mike Ganino. Thank you so much for joining me on the 1000 Authors Show.

Mike: [00:00:09] Thanks for having me. What a, what a fun place to be. I love authors and people around authors. It's I don't know. It always feels like a, a fancy place for thinkers. So thanks for having me

Vicky: [00:00:19] I don't

know

about a, a fancy place, but it's definitely a fun place to be, so, um, yeah, I'll take it.

Okay. So I have, um, I have so many questions for you today. Um, in fact, one just popped into my head, um, that I'm gonna, I'm gonna drop in in a few minutes, but before we dive in, can you just tell us, um, this is like, I. Totally got this from the little workshop that you did a little while ago. So can you tell us what, what, what do you do Mike?

Mike: [00:00:43] isn't it funny? She she's referencing a workshop that I hosted called. Tell me about yourself, which is how to respond to the question of, tell me about yourself, tell you what you do. So I always feel this, uh, funny, funny pressure of like, oh gosh, now it's my turn. Don't mess it up. But you know, a long time ago I realized that.

[00:01:00] The people with the best ideas don't win. That, that the smartest people, the people who know how to get things done. And I saw this over and over whether I was, you know, working in the restaurant industry, whether I was a wine trainer in sommelier, whether I was even when I, when I became an author, it was rarely the smartest people who made the biggest impact.

It was the ones who knew how to package all that stuff. And turn it into something relatable typically via the way that they produce and tell stories around the content. And so I got really obsessed with that of, of how do we perform? How do we package stories? How do we create narrative based. You know, information on stages and screen.

And so that's what I do these days. I help people with figuring out what that story is, and then help them figure out how to craft it, how to perform it, and ultimately how to learn to direct themselves so that when they get on stage, when they get on screen, when they get on a podcast, when they get in front of a networking group, they know how to pull the right levers to get what they [00:02:00] need to get done and to make sure that their message land.

Vicky: [00:02:03] So I, I love all of that because obviously I come from a, a writing background. So I'm, I love writing story. Storytelling by writing for me is, is a very, is a very natural thing. And so one of my first questions actually was, is there a difference between

writing a story and telling a story in person?

Because I know that I get the chance to edit and rewrite and all of that stuff, but when you're in front of people, it's like, ah, I've just gotta do this thing. Tell us about the difference between kind of writing it and speaking it in front of people.

Mike: [00:02:31] Yeah, I think there's, there's a significant difference.

In fact, when we're, when we're coaching people inside of the MICT drop method, which is the, the program that I work with people through, we tell them often, like, don't sit down and write your script first. Like, go on a walk, like figure out what you wanna talk about, get some post-it notes, something like that, mind map it or whatever, but then like record on your phone and go on a walk.

See what comes out because a few reasons, one is that when we write, we write [00:03:00] very differently than we speak. We start to, uh, we start to lose contractions. When we write everything becomes very formal. I, I always make this joke that, you know, like in the mid nineties, when Madonna started sounding more British all the time and it's happening to lady Gaga right now where it's like, oh, I thought you were from New Jersey, but okay.

Uh, we start to sound fancy sometimes when we type things out and we write in punctuation, we don't speak in punctuation. Like in all the things we've said so far, where does a period go? Where does a comma go? It doesn't matter. Cuz we don't speak in capitalization. We don't speak that way. And so what happens a lot of times when we.

Sit down to write a story that we're gonna tell on stage is that's part of the reason that, you know, you've seen those people, Vicky, where they get up and it's like, wow, that seems really stodgy. Like the, the delivery of their talk or their story seems really like overly scripted and overly rehearsed.

That's probably not the issue. The issue is it was written in language that isn't natural for the person. [00:04:00] So now they're having to go to these like Herculean efforts. They're trying to pull out their best, like Helen Mirren uh, to be an academy award-winning actress in order to deliver these lines, which sound nothing like how they actually speak.

And so when we write a story versus produce a story or, or craft a story for telling on stage, we have to think about it very differently because we speak differently than we write and audiences. Read differently than they listen. Yeah. Like if I was reading, uh, you know, I'm reading your, uh, I'm reading your book on writing books.

if I read something and I say, wait a second, hold on. Let me go back real quick. I could do that if I get lost. And I think, wait, hold on. What does this mean? Who was that again? I could go back. I don't have that luxury when I'm on stage. So I have to think about the, not only the words I'm saying in the story, but how I deliver them.

What is my pacing? Like we, we call it the five stage languages. Uh, how do I use all those languages to really cuz when we listen to people. We are listening to not the words they're

[00:05:00] saying, we're listening to the way those words feel really. And, and that's one of the big differences.

Vicky: [00:05:06] Okay. That's do you know what that's that's really made me laugh, Mike, because so often as, um, as, you know, as a writer, I've seen so much, there's so much advice out there on how to, how to write and how to tell stories.

And people are often told, write like you speak. And I'm always like banging my forehead against a wall when, when I see that, cause it's just. You hit the nail on the head. It's like, we don't write, like we speak. If you write, like we speak, nobody would be able to follow what you'd written. And so, yeah, I love that.

That's a really great explanation. And so it sounds like there's a lot of different things going on when you tell a story on stage and there's a lot to think about. And one of the things that popped out for me was, um, A little bit earlier was, was the word perform. So could you talk about that a little bit and about how being on stage is, is kind of a performance cause people think of performance as being, oh, I'm doing a song or I'm doing a dance or I'm, you know, in a play.

So can you talk about that a little bit?

Mike: [00:05:54] Yeah. And it gets such a bad rap too, because sometimes we say performance and people think, no, I wanna be authentic. [00:06:00] I wanna be just me. And I always challenge that and say, well, who is just you? Yeah. Who is just you? Because you know, I have a, I have a, almost two year old daughter.

So before I walked over to my office here today, I'm saying goodbye to her. But I talk to her very differently than I talk to you, Vicky. Because if I talk to you the way I was talking to her, you would be insulted. It'd be like, he's so. Sending, um, we, we, we constant and, and I spoke to my husband differently and I'm messaging with, uh, my friend via Voxer differently than I spoke to my husband than I speak to you than I speak to my daughter.

We are constantly choosing to perform versions of ourself. Yes. Like, like if you could, actually, if you think this gets real meta real quick, but if you could stop and think about for a moment who is the you that is watching the, you be inauthentic or authentic. And then who is the you that's thinking about the you that's watching the you that's, that it gets so deep in there.

And so what I think is a much better thing. I make fun of the authentic thing all the time. Cuz it's like [00:07:00] the worst unhelpful advice that people throw around out there. Yeah. Is that what we want is the most truthful version of you, in that moment, delivering what you're there to do, because like, if you get on stage to tell a story or you get on a podcast and you've had like a bad morning, or you had some, some bad food, that's upsetting your stomach.

We don't necessarily want the authentic version of you to come on the show and be like,

actually, I've got a little in indigestion. We don't want that. What we do want is that the words you are saying, we want to feel them and connect to them and feel that there isn't a disconnect between you and what you're saying.

And so when we think about performing. That's what we're talking about is what is the, what are the levers you pull that are you, they're just a version of you in order to communicate what you intended to communicate when you were telling that thing. That's the real thing there. So when I talk about perform, we talk about the five stage languages, which are verbal.

Verbal are all the little, and this is where the writers love. It's all the [00:08:00] alliteration. It's all which, which sound really beautiful when you say them, right? Like, um, build a better business. Ooh. That really pops when you say it out loud. Um, perfect pleasant people like, Ooh, I love all those sounds together.

It sounds different than when we read it. And so verbal. Are, are there little levers we can pull. In the word choice is for stage words like quirky, anything that has a Q in it is gonna be a fun word to say on stage or a K mm-hmm that's the first one. The second one we have is, uh, is our vocal. So how do we play and, and use our voice, like so far in this podcast, we've both been using our voice to embed meaning behind the words we're saying.

So what is the full range available to you and are you using it all? Then we have visual. What are the elements around you? What does it look like there? A lot of times when, uh, people get on stage to tell a story or they get on screen, they don't think about someone's watching the full thing. So what does the full package look like?

What's the full scene in a way that they're watching the fourth one is physical. [00:09:00] How are you moving? How do you use your hands? What is your, what, what does your face look like if you're on screen? Um, this is something I see a lot of authors struggle with, with book re I've coached a couple of pretty big name authors who were doing book tour and they were reading from their book.

And this is where they really struggled, cuz it's kind of boring to listen to an author read from their book. So they really had to think about how do I perform parts of this here? And so when I talk about performance, that's what I'm talking about is how do you embed all of the. All of the feeling, the audience that you want them to have into what you're saying, how do you learn to do that?

Vicky: [00:09:36] So that, yeah, that's I love that. I was, I was just about to ask you about the five stage language that, because you, you mentioned it, but I love that you mentioned the, the vocal side of things. So I guess what you mean by that is it's um, how do you avoid talking in a really boring monotone like this and, and kind of bring it to, I dunno, bring it to, like, I always think of it a little bit, like singing.

So is. Is that what you're talking about, kind of using the whole vocal range and, and [00:10:00] just, just kind of, I dunno, even know how to it's like dancing with your voice, I

guess is the way that I like to think about it.

Mike: [00:10:05] Yeah. I mean, that's the hard thing too. The funny thing about, about coaching, this kind of thing is I really had to go back to like all my theater work and say, okay, how do you teach something like that?

Cuz you can't just say to someone, Hey, don't be monotone. Use your voice. And it's like, well, what does that mean? Because a lot of times people. Exploring what that means for the first time. And so we, we play with these five specific levers when it comes to the voice as well. So inside of the, the vocal piece of the, of the five stage languages, we say, how can you play with pitch?

How can you play with the pitch of your voice, where it goes up and down? Um, when, if you're saying, you know, if you're reading from a book or you're, or you're planning a story and you wanna say, um, you know, Someone asked you a question. It was like, are you available? And you're exas, you know, you're just like totally out of it at that moment.

And you say available for what? That little rise of the, what tells us so much more. Yeah. And you don't need to explain anymore. So we play with, uh, pitch. We play [00:11:00] with pause. Where should you pause in your, in your, in your talk? Where would. Ask, and this is really useful for stage because in a book you don't have to worry about the pause because I just stop, like, like I'm reading and you say something powerful and I just stop.

And I think about it for a little bit. Mm-hmm but on stage, you have to give me that moment. If you say something big, you as the presenter, as the speaker, as the storyteller, as the, as the person, even reading your book to the audience, you need to stop and let the audience think about that for a moment.

Let him consider it, let him, let him, let it wash over them a little bit. So pause is another one. We work on passion, which is just, we try to come up with all P so, you know, we're squeezing over.

Vicky: [00:11:42] Yeah. I love a pile of Ps. It's great.

Mike: [00:11:44] A pile of Ps uh, passion is you sound like my daughter, a pile of Ps um, the passion is the emotion.

How do I feel about the words I'm saying right now? How do I want, what is the emotional context of this, of this sentence or this structure what's going on in there? [00:12:00] We talk about punch, which is where you give. Different words, different weight, you know? Uh, so how do you, how are you, uh, elongating words or how are you really like landing something?

How are you, you know, stretching something out. And so that's what we teach people to play with. Uh, when they're. Learning how to use their voices. So what we would do is we would look, let's say that you had a story, you're gonna go on book tour even, and you know that we've gone through your book and I've helped you pick out, you know, what are the

key parts you're gonna read?

What are the chapters you're gonna read? What are the stories you're gonna pull out now, we'd pull those into a script and then we would have you do a read through just like actors would, do you do a, a table read. So you do a read through of your script and we think, okay, that's. Uh, that feels good. That none of the words were difficult to say it all feels good.

Now we go back at it and we say, how do we apply these five stage languages to it? And when we get to the vocal part, we would look and say, okay, how do we, how could we play with this sentence? How could we really make this land? This is a big idea. What could we do here? Could we slow it down? Pacing is the fifth one, by the way, [00:13:00] could we slow it down?

And really, really let the audience think about the important thing you said or should we speed it up? So they get that this is all calamity and we gotta be thinking all of those little choices are performance elements that are meant to really communicate what you intended to communicate.

Vicky: [00:13:17] That's so helpful.

Um, and there's a lot of crossover. So I'm gonna ask you a question now, because I also, um, dunno if you know this about me, but I'm also a trapeze performer and a pole dancer and I teach that as well of one of the things that we teach our students to do, and that they find so difficult is to hold the move that they're doing for a little bit long, for longer than it's comfortable, because it's like, you know, what's coming.

But the audience needs to have time for that to land and for them to take in this amazing thing that you've just done. And so it feels to me like that's actually very similar to what you are talking about on stage is like knowing when to pause and give people time to appreciate that amazing thing that you've just dropped on them.

Mike: [00:13:51] Yeah. And you see that right with, with trapeze with pole dancing is if you do this big maneuver, you, you, you kind of lose [00:14:00] credit for doing it. if you don't give the audience a moment to kind of take it in and you see this with performers on stage, you see it with, uh, with, with performers like Beyonce or Adele, even where.

We need to give you a, if Adele just came out and was just like belting the whole time, that's a lot, we need contrast. And, and that's what I think it really is about that moment of like holding the thing or pausing after you say something, if you say something funny, let it land for a minute. Don't just keep going.

Cuz now the audience is laughing and they've missed what you said. Yeah. If you say something emotional, let them kind of let it sit on them for a minute. And I think people get uncomfortable with that silence. On stage, probably the same as with, with, um, with pole and with trapeze, it's like, well, no, I gotta, I've gotta be entertaining and doing something.

And it's like, yeah, but that doesn't mean the audience needs to just be punched in the face for 30 minutes of your performance. We need contrast.

Vicky: [00:14:52] Yeah. Yeah, definitely. It's it's that kind of, yeah, it's that, that kind of taken a moment. And so I have another question based on that then, because I [00:15:00] know that, um, On, I know that from kind of performance point of view.

And I'm wondering if this is the same for public speaking, we're always told to, you know, be bigger, like make the facial expressions bigger, make the moves bigger because that's, that's what people see. And I know that like, that's the thing that I struggle with most. Do you find that people with public speaking is that good advice for them too?

And if so, how do you help people kind of get over that self-consciousness of like, oh, I just wanna make myself small.

Mike: [00:15:25] Yeah. I think it's two. Uh, for me there's like two parts of that question, because one is that. Yes. Uh, I never think it's about being bigger. I think it's about being more intentional, being more clear.

And so a lot of times what we'll say to someone, uh, so like the director in me, I directed theater for a long time as well. So the director in me thinks, okay, I'm watching Vicky right now and she's trying to tell us. She's trying to get us to feel. So let's say that you did a scene, let's say that you did a line from your speech and you said, um, you know, and it was the, and it was watching, watching my mother do.

[00:16:00] That was one of the hardest things I've ever seen. Mm-hmm so I might say to you as a director, Hey, what are you trying to make the audience feel there? And you would say, well, I want them to really feel how hard this. And I said, okay, well I'm not buying it. So what would it look like if it was harder?

Show me harder. Show me hard. Show me softer, even cuz sometimes it's not about bigger sometimes in that moment, when you say, uh, instead of going bigger with it, bigger with the emotion, sometimes it's going softer and saying, you know, watching my mom that day, it was the hardest thing I've ever seen. And so we don't necessarily need bigger.

We need more clarity around it. We need more emotional clarity around what you're saying. And so, uh, I, I, the ad the intention of that advice go bigger. I agree with that. We often need to push ourselves to the edge of our range as performers, the edges of our voice, the edges of our ability to move, but it doesn't always mean be big and dramatic.

Okay. Yeah. Uh, it means be more clear [00:17:00] with what you're trying to transmute to the audience. For example, when I, when I'm doing like VIP work with clients, who've hired me to work with them on a speech or hired me for a book launch or something like that. I will think about what is possible for that person.

For example, I have a client named Erin King and she is, you know, big, big stage speakers speaking in stadiums and things like that. And she's very physical. She is very, she is physical

comedy. She can move. She's got facial expressions. Her face is almost like putty where she can make it contort into all kinds of, of ways when she's, when she's communicating.

So I know that what's possible for her would likely, and I've not worked with you, Vicky, but I would assume what's possible for her is different for you. And what's possible for you is different for her. And so that's the director side of it. So we teach people to write, uh, write the story, write the speech to perform, and then to learn to.

direct it. And directing is where you say, okay, based on all of those five stage languages, what's possible for me, what's possible here. What am I trying to get across here? And am I doing it. So that's [00:18:00] where we would look with, with somebody and say, okay, you don't necessarily need to go bigger. You actually need to go smaller.

Like I would love for you just to go sit on the edge of the stage and almost whisper this part to the audience. So it's always about being more emotionally clear. That's usually my advice.

Vicky: [00:18:16] I love that that's such, that's such specific advice as well as like, cuz it's, it's just better. Cause I was always kind of told, you know, make, make it bigger, but I think they meant exactly what you've just said, but just make it clearer and kind of really get to the heart of the intensity of the emotion that you're trying to convey.

I love that advice. Thank you for sharing that.

Mike: [00:18:33] And it almost goes back to, it goes back to what we were just saying about the, um, Uh, holding the move and the pause, like what we were saying, because the holding the move is about making it clearer of what just happened here. Because sometimes if we go too fast, if there's not enough contrast the audience isn't keeping up.

And so the moment wasn't clear to them, and that's what we're trying to do, regardless of whether we're holding the move, we're holding a pause, we're going, uh, for, for [00:19:00] really expressive vocal range. We're going really small. It's all about clarity for the audience so that we don't miscommunicate what we're trying to do up there.

Vicky: [00:19:09] Sure. Um, thank you so much. That's, there's loads of really good stuff in there for, for everybody. Um, so can I ask a couple of questions specifically about, um, authors and, and their books and, and kind of book tours and things, but, and, and not just book tours, but kind of going onto podcasts and any kind of.

Public speaking about their books. And I wondered if you had any advice specific to them. So I guess my first question would be, you've already given us a, a little bit of absolute gold for, for kind of how to read books, but what would, what advice would you give to authors who have been asked to read a part of their book or who want to read a part of their book on social media to make it.

You know, not just somebody staring at a book and reading it out loud.

Mike: [00:19:47] Well, I think there's a lot around the, uh, first we have to choose the piece,

right? We have to choose. What is the part I'm reading? What is the, what is the, the piece that I would be sharing here? And I think what happens a lot, I. [00:20:00] With, uh, I don't know, it, it happens a lot with authors and, and specifically, you know, I think so many folks that listen to this show are business authors.

You are one of the best in the industry to coach people through writing those better business books. Look at that alliteration, uh, writing those better business books. And so I, I feel like a lot of people. Come from that place versus coming from, you know, writing essays or writing, you know, comedic memoir or something.

So I'm gonna focus on the business people. Yeah. Part of the challenge I think we have sometimes is that we think we have to show up and we need to read like the smartest bits of our book. We need to share the, like the part with the most steps and the reality about. Being the smartest business author is it's about your ability to translate it's about your ability to take something ordinary that we miss and turn it into something meaningful.

And so often when I work with authors and let's say they only have a little bit of time. On a stage or on a panel or in a [00:21:00] podcast or a video, they only have, you know, five minutes or something to read from the book. They're not gonna read the whole book. Mm-hmm I tell them to look for that moment. What is the moment?

What is the story that really sets you up to be like, wow, I get what I get this person's perspective and where they come from. Of course, I need to get that book to learn how she applies it to social media. Or of course, I need to get that book to learn how she applies it to book coaching or whatever the case

might be. So like in the case of I'm working on the mic drop method book right now, which is the book around our methodology for all of this, the right perform and direct. And if I was invited onto a show to read a bit of it, I wouldn't read the bit that says, Hey, it's really important that you learn to write, perform and direct.

Here's the five stage languages, yada, yada, I would read the bit that talks about how I realized that what I was doing in the world of theater and comedy on stages was really applicable to the training I was doing as a restaurant trainer. That's probably what I'd focus on because then the audience would say, oh, this is smart.

This is [00:22:00] interest. That's why he's smart. It's not because he has the five steps and the five languages it's because he's translated something that I've never heard translated like this before. So that's one thing that I would say to authors is to focus on that part of your book. Um, and, and you do such a beautiful job in your book, Vicky, teaching us how to find those stories, how to weave them into our narrative.

Every chapter of your book is brilliant by the way. So I'm fanboying for you.

Vicky: [00:22:22] Thank you so much.

Mike: [00:22:23] like how to put those stories inside of the business content you wanna

teach. So that's what I would say first on finding it. And then the second thing would be going through those five stage languages and saying, okay, how do I make sure that I am not just reading from the book, but let me take the part of the book where I am gonna

read this chapter, I'm gonna read this section. Let me actually pull that outta the book, put it into a new piece of paper and treat it more like a script than reading a passage from a book. What that looks like is the, the lines get much shorter. So instead of it being like, you know, like a book length line, it may be only five or six sentences on a [00:23:00] line.

We start to break it up to read it from stage so that the pauses are not the periods. Because those aren't really the pauses of where we speak, but the pauses are actual line breaks and things like that. Then I would look at it and say, how do we layer in some of the, the other five stage languages here?

Is there anything visual I wanna do? How am I using my hand in this moment? Those kinds of things. That's, that's probably where I would start.

Vicky: [00:23:21] That was so valuable. Thank you so much. And anyone who's listening, who is thinking about going and talking. You know, on a podcast or whatever, take that advice, but also go work with Mike.

Cause , I'm now like listening to you. I'm like, oh, next time, next time I launch a book, I'm definitely coming to talk to you because this is, this is something I need help with. Um, Okay. So I have, um, we, we are running out of time. Sadly. I could talk to you all day about this, and I'm definitely by the way, gonna get you back to come and talk about your book, the mic drop method, when you've written it, if you would be willing, um, and you can, you can show us how it's done.

Um, but I was just gonna ask one more thing because, um, and I think this is, this is gonna be good for people who are on stage [00:24:00] and for people who are speaking on, um, uh, The internet, I guess, um, on videos. Sorry, I forgot the word for video then. um, how do we avoid? And I know this is probably a question that you get a lot but

I also know that it's a question that people will appreciate being answered. How do we avoid death by PowerPoint?

Mike: [00:24:18] I think it's, I think it's, uh, one, I always say this. I say we should be kinder to PowerPoint cuz it never killed anybody. Uh, what killed these things is not having the ability to direct that performance.

And so if you are going to, uh, to be delivering at a summit, you're delivering a speech at a summit, a virtual summit, or you're going on stage or something. The, the slide deck should be the last thing you think about. And when you think about it, you should be saying, okay, now that I've got my piece crafted, I've got my story crafted or I've got, you know, whatever I'm gonna be presenting crafted.

Um, I've, I've organized it. I either, you know, you storyboard it out or you write a script or

you, you outline it or whatever. Now, look at it and say, okay, [00:25:00] now that I know. From listening to Mike on Vicky's great show that I need to think about from the audience's perspective. I need to think of this all as like one communication tool I'm speaking and performing and moving the slides are showing something.

So what does all of that look like? What would be helpful here to show them what happens most often is that we sit down and we design the presentation using PowerPoint. So we sit down and we say, I'm gonna start here and then I'll say this and I'll do this. And I think that that's backwards. I think we should be designing the slides based on what we've already scripted and planned to say.

So then we look at it and we say, okay, so now that I know this is what I'm gonna be saying and doing, is there a helpful image I can show here? Is there a funny image I can show here that I can punctuate the thing I just said, are there certain words that I wanna pop up here? It, the death by PowerPoint happens because we sit down and we try to script our talk in it.

And we try to use the slide deck as a [00:26:00] teleprompter for what to say. So if we start with the piece and we go through the five, the beautiful thing about the five stage languages, by the way, and, and practicing this way is it makes memorizing your talk almost not necessary. Because at this point, you've gone through it so many times that you kind of have it in your bones, you feel it in your bones, mm-hmm that you don't even really need to.

People say like, how do I memorize? Well, if you go through the process we teach, you probably don't need to memorize cuz it's probably in there at that point. Um, and so then we don't use the slides as a teleprompter anymore. We use them to supplement the real message, which is us. We are the message on the stage.

Vicky: [00:26:37] I love that. We're the message. We're the message on the stage. I love that. Thank you. Um, and so I do have some quick fire questions for you in a minute, but just before we do, I'm, I'm quite a, I was gonna say I'm quite a visual learner. That's not even true, I'm a doing learner, so I learn best while I'm doing, but I know that some people are quite visual.

So apart from your good self Mike, um, who do you recommend that we go and watch speak, um, who is really, who's really [00:27:00] great and really entertaining and really good to watch.

Mike: [00:27:03] oh, that's an interesting question. I think there's all kinds of interesting things for that we can pull from different people. One of the things I think is really interesting to, to say to yourself, when you do.

Watch someone, because what happens is we watch them and we get imposter syndrome or we get judgey. And we say like, oh, well I wouldn't do that. I wouldn't, of course you wouldn't, you're not them. You know? So what I always say and the way that I look at it, when I'm doing, we're working on this whole new, um, we're gonna be putting out YouTube

channel this fall, and it's gonna be all like reaction videos to me, responding to talks.

But my approach is never to look at like, what could they have done? My approach is to. The thing that they did, why was it really effective? Why did it work for them? Because now I can say, Ooh, that might be useful for me. And so what I would say, first of all, before you go out and watch any of the people I'm about to mention, I would say to really think about it from the perspective of not looking at anybody on stage.

If you're at [00:28:00] a conference, people say all the time to me like, oh, do you have a hard time going? Because you know, these, this talk sucks or whatever. And I say, no, because I always look for why did that person make that choice? What was available to them? Why did they do that? That was interesting. And so that's what I would suggest.

First of all, is no matter who you go watch do that. And then a couple of people I think are really fun to, to learn from. There's a guy named Ron Tite, T.I.T.E. He's a Canadian. He is, uh, just great on stage, really just a really brilliant, uh, delivery, great performance ability. And I think if you watch him, you'll see.

Someone who you would look at and say like, oh my gosh, totally authentic. And he fully is performing. He's making really conscious choices the whole time. So if you could find some videos of him, Ron Tite, T I T E really, really great speaker, um, Erin King, who is one of my clients again, I think, I think she is, uh, is really fabulous for watching of like, why did she make those choices?

What was available to her on stage? So videos you could find of her are really great. [00:29:00] Um, And who else do I love Britney Cunningham has a great TEDx talk again. I think it's all about watching people and saying based on what was available, what was really good here to pull away. And with that, I think almost anybody could be a good lesson, right?

Vicky: [00:29:16] Yeah. Do you know what I love? I love that advice as well, because it's actually, um, really similar to what I suggest people do with books. It's like when you read a book and if you, cause I get people to, to kind of, I write quotes out from books that I love, and then I look at it and I'm like, why did I love this so much?

What was it about this that made me love this so much? What technique did they use? What words have they used? What, you know, all of that stuff. It sounds like very similar advice that you're given to kind of watch people and figure out. You know, what, what they, what they did, why they did it, why they made the choices they make.

And I just think it's such, it's such good advice and it's much more interactive and gets rid of that imposter syndrome stuff that you, you mentioned is that's, that's like, okay, well, how can I dissect this? Not dissect it, but how can I learn, learn from it, I guess is what I'm saying.

Mike: [00:29:54] Yeah. Yeah. And it helps you because then when you are in the moment, instead of thinking about all the things not to do, you're [00:30:00] thinking of like, what are the choices I can make.

Which I think is always, that's how a performer works. That's how a director chooses a director, doesn't work and say, what are all the things we cannot do? They say, what are the levers I need to pull here to make this the most effective way to deliver this message that I can. And I think that it just retrains your brain a little bit to thinking that way, instead of what's all the stuff I need to not do or remember not to do.

It's what are the things, what are my choices in this and how can I make the best one for the moment?

Vicky: [00:30:28] Yeah, and it sounds like it makes it so much more fun as well. So thank you for that. um, okay, so quick fire questions then this is a thing that I do with all of my, um, all of my podcast interviewees. Um, I'd like to just fire a bunch of questions at you, uh, so that we can get to know a little bit more about you.

So I've shamelessly stolen this by the way, from Brene Brown and then adapted it for myself. Um, so first question, what are you reading right now?

Mike: [00:30:54] I am reading. I just finished a book actually called I decided I needed to read like more [00:31:00] like fiction. So I'm reading two things right now. Um, I'm reading a book on memoir by Marion Roach Smith, and I'm actually, I'm learning with her.

I'm writing a book called the daddy issue. So she's actually my coach. Oh, amazing. A me, I think it's called the memoir project, her book. And then the other one I just finished is called a certain hunger and it is fiction and it's so great. Cuz it's written like it's a memoir of a, uh, a cannibalistic woman, uh, who eats her lovers.

And it's just so well done because it's not even campy. You would think that would be so campy and it's not, and it's not scary. It's just really fabulously written, uh, really, really well done book A Certain Hunger.

Vicky: [00:31:42] A Certain Hunger I go, well,

I'm definitely sticking that on my list cause I'm absolutely intrigued. So thank you for that.

Um, and what is a favorite, a favorite book of yours? I won't say the favorite book, cuz that for me changes a lot. So what's a favorite book of yours.

Mike: [00:31:54] A favorite book of mine. There is a book. Uh, this is such an obscure book, [00:32:00] but it's absolutely fabulous. It's from a, a, it sounds so not accurate, but it's, it's a book called A Lapsed

anarchists guide to managing ourselves or yourself. And it's from Ari Weinzweig who is one of the founders of a group in, in Michigan called Zingerman's. And, uh, and it's just a fabulous, he writes these deep, deep thought books, like great, great books. So he's got several, but the one I think is really applicable to a lot of people is called a lapsed anarchist guide to managing ourselves.

And I think it's life changing.

Vicky: [00:32:33] I love the title. I'm gonna, that's another one. That's going on my list. Thank you. Um, and a favorite film of yours?

Mike: [00:32:39] A favorite film of mine. I think that, I mean, this one of my all time, favorite movies is Godfather simply from a storytelling perspective of what they were able to do to really, I think they changed filmmaking in so many ways with that movie.

[00:33:00] The story behind it is also interesting. Nobody wanted to make it, they couldn't get a director, nobody wanted to do it. And, uh, finally, um, George Lucas, who was partners with Francis Ford Coppola in, up in, uh, in north of San Francisco said, I, you know, we need the money. So just do it, direct it. And he's like, okay, let me think about how to do it.

And his whole idea of this being a story about a king and the changing generations. And it was just such a refreshing way to tell the story that could have been. Just a really boring, typical mob movie. And it really, I think takes it to a deeper level and, and I think pushes all of us creatives to think about how we present the same old information in a new way.

Vicky: [00:33:42] Oh gosh. Well, do you know what I'm gonna. Put my hand up and admit that I've never seen the godfather and you've just, you are the first person that's ever made me wanna actually watch it. So, um, I may do that. Um, cool. Okay. And I've got another question. What is your favorite place?

[00:34:00] **Mike:** [00:34:01] My favorite place. Oh, this changed a lot for me, but for a while recently, as a parent, as a new parent, I think a lot of us go through this where you kind of like, you have that period of like losing your identity and like, who am I?

What am I I'm just covered in milk and formula. And I'm a, a, , I'm just a caretaker of this baby. And so I struggle with that a lot for a long time. And. Just like maybe in the last month, my favorite place has become the end of the night. I'm usually the one that does bedtime and just sitting with her in her little dark room, rocking her in her chair.

I've really found peace with that. And, uh, and that was a struggle for me. So that's been my favorite place right now.

Vicky: [00:34:47] Oh, I love that. I've got a little image of, you now that's, that's lovely. Um, and what are you thankful for right now?

Mike: [00:34:56] Hmm.

I mean, in this moment, I will say I'm really thankful for [00:35:00] cool people like you, who produce content and, and go out of your way to put on shows and to, uh, bring ideas and share it with people for free.

You know, this is free, what you're doing this labor. And so to believe in something so much that you show up and you help people with it, I'm really thankful that there are people like

you, Vicky, who. Thankfully, somehow run into me and invite me to come onto your show and produce great quality things for all of us.

That's, that's something I've really thought about lately is just how many people are out there doing things like that. So I'm very thankful in this moment for you. And I think more broadly, I'm really thankful that I live in a time and I live in a place and I live in my body where I can have so many options for creating.

Sometimes it's overwhelming because you're like, what do I create? What do I write? Which book do I do? Do I write the screenplay first? Or do I write the play? Uh, sometimes all those options can be hard, but it's, it's really. I think it's easy to [00:36:00] forget sometimes, cuz there's so much going on in the world.

That's that's hard or negative that we live really in, in a great time, even if it's not great all of the time.

Vicky: [00:36:09] I love that. That's yeah. It's we do live in a great time, even if it's not great all of the time. I think that's so important to remember. And I am also thankful for you coming on the show, cuz you said you were a fun, you know, fanboying about me.

I've been fan fangirling about you for a while, so I'm just really delighted that you're here. um, okay, so that was, that was all very, um, serious. So if you could have any kind of a tale, what kind of a tale would you choose and why?

Mike: [00:36:33] Like an animal tale or like an epic journey tale.

Vicky: [00:36:36] Oh, an animal tale.

Mike: [00:36:37] Oh. I think I'm trying to think of all these animal tales.

Now I would probably wa I'm a, taurus like by sign. So I always like things to be a little bit, you know, I'm a little bit extra mm-hmm so I would say that I'd really love to have. Like a, a big thick, beautiful red Fox tale, like just like [00:37:00] beautiful. And also my husband and my daughter's last name is Fox. So that fits okay.

Vicky: [00:37:05] I love that. I did not, I did not know what you're gonna say then, because my husband's answer to this question. It's always, I would like a big dinosaur tale with a Fizer on the end, which is one of those big things with the spikes. So, um, but yeah, red foxtail, I can see with the red foxtail. Um, and OK, so what's on your bedside table.

Mike: [00:37:23] Oh, my gosh, the truth.

Vicky: [00:37:25] Yeah if you're willing,

Mike: [00:37:27] so much

stuff. It's, uh, there's so much stuff over there. Um, I've got all kinds of diabetes things. I'm, I'm a type one diabetic since I was eight years old. So I've got glucose tablets for any

overnight, low blood sugar emergencies. We've got test strips, all those kinds of things.

And I've got, um, there is a book there actually called. I think it's called all the uses of enchantment or something like that. And it's, um, it's very, it looks, it sounds very fun, but it's actually quite researchy, so it's taken me a long time to get through it. So that's still sitting over there [00:38:00] and, uh, what else is over there?

And a phone charger.

Vicky: [00:38:02] Yeah. Cool. Thank you. Thank you for answering that, honestly. Um, I'm never quite sure whether people are gonna go with that one, ask them cuz you never know what they've got on their bedside table. So, um, and um, my last question before I thank you so much, um, is to ask where can we find out more about you?

Where can people, work with you, where can we find out everything that they want to know about Mike?

Mike: [00:38:23] Yeah, there's two, two, uh, quick and easy ways. One, if you just wanna grab like a quick little, you know, Uh, quick little something to, to kind of think about stories differently and, and the stories you might tell we've got over at mikeganino.com/storycraft a little guide for you on the five stories, uh, that, that we think you should tell and how to kind of think about putting them together, how to plot them out.

And if you are thinking about wanting some help with all this, and you wanna learn more about working with us, then you go to mikeganino.com/apply, and then that gets you access to a training that deep dives into. How we should be thinking about writing [00:39:00] speeches, how we should be thinking about the five stage languages and directing speeches, what we get wrong, what the myths are.

So it goes into all of that great stuff for you. So, you know, if you're even thinking like maybe I could work with this guy, maybe there's something here. Uh, I encourage you to go do that because the training itself is really helpful and, and gives you. A different take on it. And, uh, and I think even if you go and you're shopping for story and public speaking coaches elsewhere, it at least gives you a frame of reference to use as you're looking at us versus other people.

And then of course, I'm on all the socials as Mike Ganino. So wherever you like to, to do social things, uh, I'm there. And, and we can play.

Vicky: [00:39:36] Fantastic. Thank you so much. Um, Mike, it's been such a pleasure. Thank you so much for coming on the show and being so generous with your wisdom and, um, with your stories, it's been a real delight talking to you.

Um, thank you for investing your time here.

Mike: [00:39:51] I appreciate it. Thanks for having me.