

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF A PODCAST INTERVIEW

Conference Handout
Faith Ijiga

ABOUT THIS HANDOUT

Podcast interviews are one of those things that a lot of authors know they should be doing, but sometimes they don't really understand how to make the most of it when they finally get the opportunity.

And I think that's where the problem usually starts.

Because it's not just about showing up on a podcast and talking about your book. It's about how you show up, what you say, and how that conversation makes people feel at the end of it.

So this handout is just me sharing some of the things I've learned from being both a podcast guest and a host over the years.

What I hope it helps you do is:

- Understand how to connect better when you're interviewed
 - Know what to share and what not to worry too much about
 - Avoid sounding too guarded or too rehearsed
 - And most importantly, understand why honesty actually works
-

2.WHY PODCAST INTERVIEWS MATTER

One thing I've noticed is that podcast audiences are not the same as other audiences.

They are not just trying to get information from you.

They are actually listening for you as a person.

They want to hear how you talk, how you think, how you tell your story, and sometimes even how you process things in real time.

And because of that, people usually don't remember every detail you said on a podcast.

But they almost always remember how you made them feel.

And that feeling is usually what makes them go and pick up your book afterward.

3.WHAT I HAVE LEARNED AS A PODCAST GUEST AND HOST

Over the years, I've had the opportunity to be on podcasts as a guest, and I've also hosted a lot of guests on my own show.

And one of the biggest lessons I've learned from both sides is this:

The best interviews are not the most perfect ones. They are the most honest ones.

I've been on podcasts where I was asked to share my personal story.

And because I've also sat on the other side as a host, I already understood something important about interviews like that.

So I allowed myself to just be open.

And on one of those interviews, I actually found myself becoming emotional while talking.

I was crying at some point, not because I planned it or wanted to create a moment, but because I was genuinely reliving what I was talking about.

After the interview, I didn't feel bad about it at all.

What stayed with me was something simple:

Somewhere out there, someone is probably listening to this and thinking, "I'm not alone in this."

And that is usually what makes podcast interviews powerful.

It's not just about telling your story.

It's about someone hearing it and feeling understood.

4. THE BALANCE BETWEEN BEING OPEN AND BEING WISE

One of the fears a lot of authors have is this:

“If I say too much, I will spoil my book.”

And I understand that fear, especially for fiction writers.

But what I’ve seen over time is that sharing your story does not actually take away interest in your book.

It usually does the opposite.

It makes people more curious.

Because now they don’t just want the idea of the story, they want to understand how you turned that real experience or inspiration into a full book.

At the same time, you don’t need to say everything.

You don’t need to overshare or expose every detail of your life.

So the balance is really simple:

Be open enough to connect.

Be wise enough to keep what is personal, personal.

5. WHAT I'VE SEEN WHILE HOSTING GUESTS

There have been times when guests send me their books before coming on the show.

And when I read them, I can already tell when we're about to have a really good conversation.

But during the actual interview, I've noticed something over and over again.

Some guests come in very careful. Very structured. Very guarded in how they answer questions.

And the answers are not wrong. They are actually fine.

But they feel distant.

So sometimes I pause at some point and just encourage them to relax a bit into the conversation and just talk like they would if they were explaining their story to a friend.

And once that shift happens, everything changes.

They become more natural. They laugh more. They explain things better. They open up more.

And after the interview, I've had several guests tell me, "That was the most freeing interview I've ever done."

And I think that's because authenticity always connects more than trying to be perfect.

6. HOW DIFFERENT AUTHORS CAN THINK ABOUT PODCAST INTERVIEWS

This is where it gets a bit practical, because not every writer should approach interviews the same way.

MEMOIR / NON-FICTION WRITERS

If you are writing memoir or personal non-fiction, your story is already the message.

You don't need to say everything in one interview, but you also shouldn't hide the emotional truth of your journey.

What works better is focusing on:

- What changed you
- What you learned
- The key moments that shaped your story

Instead of trying to tell everything step by step, you can simply say something like:

"This book is really about a season in my life where I had to deal with grief, and what that process taught me about healing and identity."

That alone already opens the door for connection.

FICTION WRITERS (ROMANCE, GENERAL FICTION, ETC.)

For fiction writers, the fear is usually spoilers.

And that fear is understandable.

But you don't need to tell your whole plot for people to connect with you.

What people actually respond to is the emotional idea behind the story.

So instead of breaking down your entire book, you can just say:

"This is a story about heartbreak and hope."

Then you can talk a bit about:

- Why that theme matters to you
- What inspired it emotionally
- Or even a general real-life reflection that connects to it

And then you bring it back to the book naturally.

THRILLER / HARD-THEME WRITERS

For thriller writers dealing with things like violence, terrorism, corruption, or persecution, there is always this tension of not wanting to say too much.

But honestly, listeners are not usually looking for all the plot details.

What they connect with is the meaning behind the story.

So instead of walking people through scenes or chapters, you can say something like:

“This story is really about what happens when ordinary people are caught in extraordinary situations, and how they respond under pressure.”

And then you can talk more about:

- Why that kind of story matters
- What real-world awareness or experience shaped it
- What questions the story is trying to explore

That alone is usually enough to pull people in.

7.WHY HONESTY ACTUALLY BUILDS READERS

At the end of the day, readers don't really come from perfect explanations of your book.

They come from connection.

When someone hears you speak and they feel like you are being real with them, something happens.

They become curious.

And that curiosity is usually what leads them to your book.

People may forget your exact words.

But they rarely forget how your story made them feel.

FINAL THOUGHT

You don't need to be overly polished on podcasts. You just need to be present.

You don't need to share everything. You just need to share enough to connect. Because in the end, readers are not created by promotion. Readers are created by connection.

RECOMMENDED PODCAST LISTENING (REFERENCE LINKS)

Below are some podcast interviews that are worth listening to just to observe how conversations flow and how guests connect with audiences:

A Roller Coaster Ride With Dany Acosta: Author of Blindly Painting Words of Love:

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/a-roller-coaster-ride-with-dany-acosta-author-of-blindly-painting-words-of-love--58315729>

Get Out of That Narcissistic Relationship: A Life Just Like Mine with Dr. Donna Kincheloe:

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/get-out-of-that-narcissistic-relationship-a-life-just-like-mine-with-dr-donna-kincheloe--61068518>

Breaking Free and Living Loved: Hellbent and Heavenward with Mona Rosene:

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/breaking-free-and-living-loved-hellbent-and-heavenward-with-mona-rosene--60623732>

Narcissism: (Section #1) Origin, Causes and Behavioural Patterns with Dr. Donna Kincheloe:

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/narcissism-section-1-origin-causes-and-behavioural-patterns-with-dr-donna-kincheloe--64121759>

Setting Healthy Boundaries and Learning to Say No with Kat Roedell:

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/setting-healthy-boundaries-and-learning-to-say-no-with-kat-roedell--61165749>

"have You Ever Read a Political Thriller?" Jungle Justice by faith Ijiga:

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/have-you-ever-read-a-political-thriller-jungle-justice-by-faith-ijiga--59985668>

Just Talking About Jesus with Jan Johnson:

https://janjohnsonauthor.substack.com/?utm_campaign=profile_chips

For fiction authors

Between the Lines , By Jennifer Sienes,:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1uU2RwoCAUd5pZBpBjDB8C?si=CYoFPuVpRm6a0XedHs-vAg>

When you listen, don't just listen for content.

Listen for:

- How people tell their stories
- How open they are without oversharing
- How naturally they talk about their work
- And how connection is built without forcing it

You can contact me at authorfaithijiga@gmail.com.