

Matt Bowles: My guest today is Taylor Wallace. She is a longtime digital nomad, remote entrepreneur, nonprofit leader and skydiver who has traveled to over 80 countries over the last decade. Taylor has lived and worked around North America, Latin America and Southeast Asia while leading strategic partnerships in venture capital, emerging tech and social. She advocates for [The Fit Founder](#) lifestyle, blending entrepreneurship with intentional living. And her work has been featured in Entrepreneur magazine.

Taylor, welcome to the show.

Taylor Wallace: What a flattering bio. It's always exciting to hear yourself reread. It's like, oh, wow.

Matt Bowles: Well, you have done some amazing things and I am so excited to have this conversation with you. But let's just start off by setting the scene and talking about where we are recording from and the fact that we have agreed to make this a virtual wine night. So, let's also talk about what we are drinking. I am actually in the Blue Ridge mountains of Asheville, North Carolina tonight and I have just opened a red blend from the southern Rhone region of France. So, I am going to be drinking through that tonight. But where are you, Taylor, and what are you drinking?

Taylor Wallace: So, I'm currently in Chicago, Illinois and I'm not as fancy with the nice European wine, but I'm a big fan. It's Bread & Butter Rosé. It Tastes like wedding, but yeah, it's from Napa.

Matt Bowles: Let's start off with this, you have traveled to at least as many countries as I have. You've been traveling the world for so many years. What is one of your most memorable wine experiences around the world?

Taylor Wallace: I think one of the most memorable was a port adventure. I was traveling with some friends in Porto in the north of Portugal. And my parents growing up didn't drink, but my dad went to business school, I guess with the person that would go on to inherit one of these port houses. Port is very old and so a lot of the few brands that are left are very old and they're like passed down through families. So I was in Porto, I was like talking to my parents and they're like, oh, you should text this person. And so, I sent them a text. I'm like, there's no way they're going to answer. And they did answer and they invited us to do their port house tour the next day because it was booked up for the entire time we were there.

Fast forward, our tour was 11:30 in the morning and we stayed there until 3 AM the next morning. We went through the formal tour and then they showed us their vintage cellar and a tasting turned into. I don't even. It was just such a great experience and it's so indicative of my favorite type of travel where you have a plan and then you just trust in the vision and whatever unfolds or iterations that come up majority of the time, with the right mindset, it ends up being for the best if you maybe don't see it in that moment. And that was definitely one of those situations because in the back of my head, part of me was, I'm going to have to hang out with my parent's friends and they're going to ask so many questions or like that light anxiety when you're gifted a relationship. And they were so cool and so kind.

Matt Bowles: Shout out to Portugal and the wine scene across the whole country. A lot of people do not know. I think Portuguese wines are the most underrated wines in all of Europe. I went a few years ago for my birthday. I took six friends and we went to the Alentejo region of Portugal and we rented a villa for a long weekend. Taylor this villa was in the middle of literally nowhere. We had chickens in the front and we could go in the morning to the chicken coop and take eggs from the chicken coop to make omelets in the morning. It was like that. And then we would go wine tasting around to all the wineries in the daytime. And then we would come back and three or four of the six people that were there were serious musicians. And

so, I had them bring the guitar. And then we would come back after a day of wine tasting and just stay up until four in the morning playing music and drinking the wines that we bought at the wineries that day. And we were in the middle of nowhere. So, you can be three or in the morning playing loud music and all of this kind of stuff, and nobody is anywhere near you to hear it. So, I have some amazing wine memories from Portugal as well. It's such a special country.

Taylor Wallace: It's such a special experience, and I did not realize how rare it was or is until. I'm not going to call it repatriating, because I don't know if this is permanent, but one year in Chicago, I cannot remember the last time I felt free of sound since I moved here. There's always someone around or I don't want to bother a neighbor, or there's no primal yells happening here. And it makes such a difference when you can't just go be free and weird out and about. I kind of miss that hearing you say that. I'm like, oh, man, 3:00AM sound with friends. What a distant memory.

Matt Bowles: Well, you mentioned your parents, and I understand you just got back from spending the holidays with them in Panama. Can you talk about what they're doing in Panama and what that experience was like hanging out with them there? Why are they there now?

Taylor Wallace: Yeah, it was a really great trip. So, they were there because they live there. They are officially Panamanian residents as of maybe two years ago. So, they bought a home and south of Panama and Boquete. And in the beginning, they were going for two months at a time. And then I feel like they were just hesitant to really leave the U.S. but looking back on it, my grandmother was still alive at the time and she was living in Baltimore, and my siblings have just had a new baby. But since, I guess in the last year, my grandmother passed away, my nephew was running around and making fun sounds. So, yeah, they are going to be in Panama now for this iteration, I think the next eight months before we all come back together for a family holiday.

So, it was really cool to kind of get to see them in their world because I visited with them before. But in a way, they were also visiting themselves. So, they still had some carryover stress from the States or just other external things. And now that they're settled there and they know they're going to be there for a bit. I could just feel a difference in the energy. It's a very special feeling to know that your parents are happy or fulfilled. They're going to brunch and playing pickleball tournaments. And it's really exciting to see, especially as the youngest, because I feel like I've been the last holdout that's keeping them from fully relaxing. They're like, what country is Taylor in again? Like, oh, God, I don't know. Like, hopefully a safe one. And now I'm secure, "in the U.S." and they're like, okay, I think we did it. I think we can relax now.

Matt Bowles: Can you share a little bit more about your parent's story, including their heritage, where they are from, and then where you were born and grew up?

Taylor Wallace: So, I grew up outside of D.C. I'm the youngest and only girl in a family of five kids. And of course, my parents. So, my father is, I guess you'd say Brazilian, Trinidadian. And I have this question mark at the end of it because my parents have been very just intentional with how they define identity. So, my dad first generation, and my mom is first generation post reservation. So, her mother was half Saponi, half black, or African American, and her father was half Saponi and half Irish. My mom was one of nine. So, in addition to having a dynamic cultural background, just having that many siblings, obviously there was a range of complexions and features.

And so, my mom was almost the middle, I guess she was the fourth youngest. And she would tell me stories about if they were traveling somewhere as a family, especially down south, they would stop somewhere to go to the bathroom, and only half of them could use the bathroom because they looked white and the other half had to go pee in the trees. So, I can only imagine what that does to your psychology from a young age. And so all that is to say, when we were coming up, and I don't know if you remember in grade school, and they give you an assignment like, make a tri-board about your heritage and where your family comes from. And my mom was like, just spin the globe and pick a place. Don't let them push you in a box.

Matt Bowles: How did you navigate that multicultural heritage as you were coming up and as you got older?

Taylor Wallace: So that's very interesting because I have this answer in my head. But when I actually pause to go frame by frame through life, I think in my earlier years I was particularly hungry for a defined identity. And so, I would visit with one of my aunts on my mom's side for a weekend who is very involved with our native heritage. She goes to powwows. My cousin's name is Little Looking Cloud. They are native. And so, one of the weekends I was visiting with her, we went to a powwow and I watched my cousin's dance. And I just. In my mind, I'm like, okay, this is it. This is what I identify with. And then fast forward another few years. I went to my first Brazil Day, big celebration with some family. I think it was outside of Boston. Again, I was quite young, but I remember coming out of that event. Okay, yeah, this takes me back to the summers and playing with my cousins on the beach in Fortaleza. Okay, now I'm Brazilian.

So, I just had these waves of identity. And I never really processed the impact of being a hyphenated American, especially because it was never a box that my parents put us in. It wasn't even reinforced verbally, but it was just how I chose to feel. I think when you're that age, at least as a young lady, you feel all the feels. But yeah, I think it was really cool because some of my earliest memories are again, having four older brothers. I was often a fly on the wall for a lot of these young man pep talks. This is what it means to be a Wallace Honor character. At the foundation of it is a lot of tribal values. Look around the room. This is our tribe. Blood is thicker than water. There is no one out there that is going to love you more, fight for you harder than the people in this room.

And I'm like, yeah, I know, just a little tailor in her pigtails. But another thing they really reinforce is you define who you are. Don't let anyone else put you in a box. And I guess it took me a bit of time to fully appreciate it. Having the opportunity to really explore the full spectrum of the blood in my veins, but also having the support to give me the space to figure out where I felt the most connection or the most support or just fascination. And that let me play a little bit as I got older and sought out more and more experiences and opportunities to just engage of different parts of each of those cultures. Obviously, it's a complex topic, but a relevant one to not forget because it's definitely a big part of my identity and my journey, I guess, in the earlier years.

Matt Bowles: Well, you also have been traveling the world since a very young age. Can you talk about how old you were the first time you went to South Africa and what some of your memories are from that trip?

Taylor Wallace: I was in the fifth grade and I know that because we were traveling for a month and a half and my fifth-grade teacher, Ms. Gavin, she was like, I love that for you. She gave me like a packet of the worksheets of whatever they were going to do over that time. And then this velvet blue journal took my only assignments were to make sure I finished the worksheets before I came back, but that I had to keep a

journal for each of the days because she wrote a little note in the front. Taylor, I'm so happy you're going to get to have this experience. I want you to think about the smells and the sounds and looking back on it, I was like, fuck, what an awesome teacher. I wonder where she is today.

So, my dad was an advisor at this time to the governor of Maryland. And they would have these delegations that went to certain countries, but it was a long trip and it had a lot of pieces in a certain part that were formally facilitated. But my dad in particular, he and I share a strong affinity for history in some ways different segments of history, but there is for sure some overlap. So, we spent a lot of time. We went to Robben Island and we did a lot of the Nelson Mandela centric things. We went to Soweto and the sites of a lot of these uprisings and honestly massacres and getting to see the abandoned downtown cities after the great white flight when Nelson Mandela was elected president.

It was a lot of juxtaposition from the formal state dinner to literally walking around Soweto on a corner memorial here on June 16th of this year, 22 students were gunned down by the Africana police when they were having a peaceful protest. Like, fuck. Like this country is so confusing because it wasn't like a vacation to the Bahamas or something. It was like an international trip. And I think at that age, paired with being forced to think about it and share my feelings and thoughts, it was definitely a very impactful first huzzah into my global disposition.

Matt Bowles: So, when you came back from that trip, had you done the journaling and did you present it to your teacher and your class and what do you remember from the experience when you returned with your journaling?

Taylor Wallace: I actually did not have to present to my classmates, which I think was very beneficial, I guess, because her and I just talked about it together. And I feel like I was able to be so much more honest and candid about maybe things that I didn't understand. But I just felt that it was a safe space to talk about some stuff versus 9-year-old and the only person of color in my fifth-grade class talking about the racial tension of South Africa and the apartheid, like, that probably wouldn't have been a very fun conversation. So, I did get to review it, but I reviewed it directly with my teacher, and she was just so positive about the whole experience. I knew it was cool, but thinking about her reaction to the things that I did and that I saw, I just felt really accomplished, like I had done something special. So that was really awesome.

Matt Bowles: If you remember at the time, at that age, what were your impressions of the dynamics of white supremacy in South Africa and the history that you learned there, when you compared that with what you understood about your lived reality in Baltimore in the United States and how white supremacy manifests there in the history of racism in a city like Baltimore?

Taylor Wallace: Oh, man. Both of my parents have strong roots in Baltimore. They didn't meet until they went to college, but my dad was from West Baltimore, my mom from East Baltimore. And it is crazy to hear them retell stories of their youth, or my mom's case, four of my uncles and the friends that they grew up with and the stuff that they had to go through. I mean, the poverty, the alcoholism, the police brutality, the racial profiling, the gang violence, the emergence of drug and addiction with crack, there's just so much stuff. And they just talk about it like, yeah, that's just what it was. And I'm like, oh, my gosh, we got to unpack all this trauma that you guys have clearly varied. But I guess they were just built different back then because it really was the status quo. It's not like people were in therapy or really processing through a lot of this.

And so, I grew up in the suburbs, and so my day today was very different from my parents, and they did a really good job. And I think that this is a whole other level of intention for me, being the only girl. I think my parents really went out of their way to give me the resources to not be the black girl. So, from whatever sports I wanted to try, if I wanted to host a party in 8th grade, clear all the furniture out, grinding on the walls, no alcohol. So, I had great friends. I really thrived in my sports, and I really feel like they supported me and didn't really try to dampen or snuff my flame of all the world's going to beat you down, just get ready to be a victim. So, they allowed me to go through my own journey while being very proactive and intentional of making sure I understood the world that I was going to leave the bubble of home and move into.

So, we watched a lot of documentaries and movies about Martin Luther King and kind of just going back, back, back. So now we're in the La Amistad, the early slavery. It was a lot. There were, I think, three distinct times in my childhood where I stopped talking to my white friends for one or two days because I would just watch something that was so fucked. Like I couldn't watch a make out scene in a movie, but there was no historical documentary that I was told to leave the room from.

Matt Bowles: Well, you also got to spend some summers in Singapore, and I'm curious if you can share the context for that, but also what you remember about Singapore. What were the highlights for you at that young age?

Taylor Wallace: So, my mom spent her working career at Procter & Gamble (P&G), and they're the parent company for most things in your kitchen or bathroom. So, from the soaps and the paper towels and the makeup and all that good stuff. And so, my mom's best friend was someone that she worked with for a long time, and also my godmother. And so, I think P&G was in the process of acquiring a certain Asian, like, skin cream. I don't know how old I was, maybe 11, where I'd start having these distinct memories. So, yeah, I would go to kind of spend some time with them in Singapore. The thing that I just remember the most is being able to just go out at such a young age. Definitely didn't have a cell phone. There's no mobile Internet. And I was just given the reign to just explore the idea being that Singapore was so safe that they literally had no concern other than I might lose my way.

So, I had a little paper map in my back pocket, and at some point, I was there for Chinese New Year. So maybe this was like a year or two later. And there were all of these parties in the streets and different quadrants of the city. It had carnival energy. There was just so many people and so much going on, and I never lost that freedom. So, I remember being in the dance quadrant. We're, like, playing music and all of the young people were dancing in the street. And I don't know what quadrant they were in, but it sounded boring when they were telling me about it. And so that was another really cool anchor memory of, like, wow, the world can be clean and kind and safe. What a novel concept. Yeah. Singapore was and is a very special place. I always love it when I have a chance to visit.

Matt Bowles: It's amazing. I went for my first time in 2016. I was living in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, which is like a 25-minute flight to Singapore. And I was there actually on my remote year program. You and I both did remote year. My first month of my 12-month program of remote year was Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Taylor Wallace: Oh God.

Matt Bowles: I had 72 people on my remote year program. This was their first year of operations. They put us up in Bukit Bintang. We're all living in the same building, 72 people. And everybody was just like meeting

each other. We're all out of the city as well. And so then like the very first week of remote year, some of the people on my remote year program approach me and they're like, the Formula one Grand Prix is in Singapore this month while we're here now. I didn't know anything about car racing. I'm like Formula One. I was like, it's not like NASCAR. They're like, no, dude, it's not like NASCAR. But don't worry, we'll tell you everything you need know. You don't need to know anything about it, but trust us, you're going to want to come to this. It's like going to the World Cup. I mean, this is going to be over the top. You got to go, you got to be on the scene. I was like, okay, sure, why not? So, 10 of us go from Kuala Lumpur to Singapore and we are there for the Formula one Grand Prix which is, first of all it's a night race.

And second of all, it is the street circuit. So, you've got \$30 million cars going 230 miles an hour around high-rise building through the. And then of course, it's just this massive festival, all these A list musicians are performing and the whole city is just nuts. And then we decided that if we're going to go to Singapore, we really want to try to figure out how to get into the pool on the top of the Marina Bay Sands Hotel. And the only way you can do that is to stay there. And the Marina Bay Sands, for people that don't know, this is really the architectural centerpiece of the Singapore skyline. And it's three skyscraper buildings next to each other and one rooftop pool deck over the top of all three buildings. And we're like, we have got to figure out how to do that.

So of course, during the F1, it's preposterously expensive to stay there, but we're like, let's do this. We'll rent an Airbnb. We'll squish five dudes into a two-bedroom Airbnb for the duration of the F1. And then once prices go back to normal, three of us will stay an extra night and we'll split one room at the Marina Bay Sands, and we'll just literally sit by the pool all day long. I mean, this is the world's largest infinity pool. You swim out to the end of the infinity pool and you're looking over the whole city of Singapore, and you can go there. We went there. We checked in early. So, we get there at noon. They're like, your room's not ready. We're like, perfect. Can we go to the pool? So, we go to the pool at noon, and we literally stayed until 11pm when it closes. So, you're out there at night.

Taylor Wallace: And the sun sets.

Matt Bowles: And speaking of Rose, by the way, since you're drinking it, one of the guys on my Remote Year program, he just loved rose, that was his thing. Everywhere we went, no matter where we were, all he would order is a bottle of rose. So, he was one of the three guys that did the Marina Bay Sands with us. So, we get up there at noon and he starts ordering the. It was all French Rose, from Provence. And so, they're bringing the bottles over. By the time it got into the evening, he's trying to order another bottle of Rose. They're like, sir, we literally have no more. You drank us out of Rose'. So, we officially I can make the claim that we drank the Marina Bay Sands out of Rose', but it was unbelievable. And I have insanely amazing memories from Singapore.

Taylor Wallace: It's so cool. And that hotel is insane. I mean, the pool makes it all worth it, but the actual hotel is so massive. I only like large crowds when it's really worth it. When I'm in Rio, I'll do Carnival, but I go with my friends to specific blocos on certain days that are very special. We go every year or something. You will never find me just wandering the streets amongst the thousands.

Matt Bowles: So, I would love to hear more about your connection with Brazil, with your Brazilian heritage, your time in Brazil, starting from when you would go there as a kid, all the way up until you studied abroad there and spent much more extended time in Brazil. Can you share a little bit about that journey? Some of

the highlights of Brazil for you, but also how that impacted your identity and your connection with your Brazilian heritage over the years.

Taylor Wallace: Yeah, so my dad's family was from Fortaleza, which is northeast of Brazil in the state of Sierra, and beaches are very pretty. But I just remember the energy of our family. So, when we first arrived, we were staying at. I asked you what I've been like my great aunt at her house, and her house is, like, right on the beach. And it was so cool. And then I think we're just finishing dinner. Fortaleza has a fuck ton of flies, so every meal, you have to cover everything with lace. And I remember thinking, like, this is not going to work. My first trip, I'm like, no, I don't want to eat anything. But as we're finishing dinner, I hear all this noise outside. Horns honking, and me and my family. What the hell is that?

So, we go outside, and there's three cars of my cousins. And then, like, my aunts or I guess, like distant second aunts or I don't even know, and they're hogging their horn and hanging out of the car like, yeah, you're here. I think only one of the 12 spoke any English. And so, it was just all vibes, you know? One of the most distinct memories is just the energy was not just like, one of youth or like, oh, they're drunk, because they're all Adventist, which is the same religion I grew up. So, Adventists don't drink alcohol. They don't eat meat. They don't. They do processed sugar. And so, I'm like, this is just pure royal vibes. You know, they're just really amped that we're here.

And so, I just love that these second aunts and uncles that were, like, older than my parents had the same vivacious energy. And I quickly learned that that was Brazilian culture. And I will qualify. Brazil is a very large country with a lot of states and cities, and there's the interior. Then you've got Sao Paulo, which is like New York. There are different definitions of Brazilian culture, but I think most people, when they think of Brazil, their mind goes to Rio. The beaches where people are just. Yeah, maybe things are slower. But any day you go out with an open mind, you're going to meet someone awesome. Even if no same language, words are exchanged. Eye contact and a smile, and they're like, you know, the thumbs up. Okay, sweet. I just made a new friend.

Matt Bowles: 100% Brazil is so magical like that. I have been to Brazil now five times, as you know. I recently just spent five weeks in Rio. It was actually my first time back to Rio in 10 years. Because in 2015, I lived in Rio for two months. And it just blew my mind. I didn't leave Rio to see any other part of Brazil. I was like, I do not believe anything else could be more amazing than this. I'm staying in Rio the whole time. And then I started traveling and on remote year, I started meeting other people. And they were telling me their favorite city in the world is São Paulo. And I was like, you've been to Rio? They're like, yeah. And you've been to Tokyo and Istanbul? They're like, yeah, Sao Paulo is my favorite city in the world. I'm like, what? I got to go. So, then I went back. Literally, when my remote year program ended, we ended in Buenos Aires.

Taylor Wallace: Oh, yeah.

Matt Bowles: That was month 12. I flew by myself from Buenos Aires to Sao Paulo. And I was just. I am going on a street art tour. I am immersing in the culinary scene. I am going to just do the things I want to do in Sao Paulo because I've got to see this city, see the street parties, all this stuff. And then I went back and I spent time in Salvador de Bahia. And then I went back and spent time in Jericoacoara and the northern beach town. So, I have on back to Brazil. And each time I go, it just feels magical. When I step into the country in any of these places, I mean, they all feel amazing. So anytime I'm not in Brazil, I just miss Brazil. It's just magical to me.

Taylor Wallace: Don't say these things to me. Now I'm like, google flights, Chicago to Rio, one way tomorrow. Totally. I think that ignited the baby flame. But one of the things from those early experiences in Fortaleza, because my closest brother and I are three years apart, and then it's six years to my brother, who's the middle child, and then three years, three years. So, it's almost like my first three brothers were one band. And then me and my closest brother were kind of like a second band because there was so much time between us and from the very first visit. And it makes sense in retrospect, but at the time it sucked. My mother was very apprehensive to let me go anywhere or do anything. But she's also a total feminist. So, she would never say that my brother could go because he was a boy. So, she would say, oh, it's because his Portuguese is better. And so, I feel more comfortable. But your Portuguese isn't good enough that I want you out there.

And so, this little thought was activated in my brain. I'm going to master Portuguese, so this can never be an excuse. And I can go with everyone else and do all the fun things that I have to sit at home. And I laugh about it now, but that really was huge because it stuck with me. By the time I got to College I was taking literature and composition classes. And that ultimately led to me being able to petition Amherst for a special exemption for my study abroad. So, I think the typical study abroad is like one semester a normal school. I was able to get an approval for like a year and a half on the condition that I wrote a particular type of thesis. So, I double majored in history and computer science. And so, I was able to petition to directly enroll the most prestigious private college or university in Rio. And because my Portuguese was good enough, I had to take a test. I was able to direct enroll instead of going through a study abroad program because one, I think there was only one with some random state college in New York.

But that meant I went from, or my parents went from paying an Amherst tuition to paying a Brazilian tuition. So, they were really stoked at the idea of me taking a year and a half. And in order to justify that much time, I had to choose a thesis topic that was a little dynamic, but it was one that I was genuinely interested in as the direction I was going. And so, I wrote my thesis on the role of the CIA and the U.S. and the degradation of democracy and political structure in Latin America. So yeah, I just spent about a year and a half reading about all the fucked-up stuff that America has done over the years. We have had such a disgraceful role in the history of a lot of countries that are still dealing with the fallout of what we have done and introduced and supported in these countries. The coups and the mass murders and the disappearances of. It's bad. And as someone that always had a lukewarm connection with my American as an identity, it really pushed me the opposite or further down the path of I don't identify with. This country was clearly not built for me.

And after learning all this and seeing the direction that a lot of these things are headed or the things that haven't changed, maybe I'm okay with that. And so, while I was processing through these things, like in the classroom, one of my first memories, within the first maybe three months, a lot of people say that Brazil or Rio is very racist. In reality, they're very classist. And there just happens to be a very strong correlation between complexion in class or income. But no matter what you look like, if you have money, you are treated very well. So, I remember there was a day I've been out partying with my friends the night before. So, this is a Sunday and sometimes when I get homesick, my favorite thing to do is to go see a movie because no matter what country you are in, in the world, movie theaters are always the same temperature because they have to be that cold to preserve the film, and they smell like popcorn. And the majority of the time, the movies are in English with subtitles.

So, it's kind of like you're transported home for a chunk of time. And so, I was heading to the movies, which is in a mall, and I'm wearing my college lacrosse issue sweatsuit, gray on gray grout set. My hair is in a bun.

Like, I just. I didn't give. Like, I've been there long enough that I'm like, this is me time. I don't care what I look like. And so, I walk into the mall, and I was like, oh, I wonder if they have anything cool at this little hipster store that sometimes I would pass through. So, I took a detour on my way to the movie, and I noticed the same fucking security guy just is popping up, like, every corner I turn, and I'm like, what the fuck? And as I took out my phone to record this person trying to murder me, I swear, the second he saw my iPhone, he was like, oh, okay, she's not a hobo. She has money. And then he, like, fucked off. And that was the first time I was like, what, was he afraid that I was recording him or. And as I talked to some of my Brazilian friends about it, that's when it was brought to my attention that that was why.

And so that was a big thing for me as well, because I strongly feel that in the U.S. being another that is doing very well, it almost puts you even more at risk for discrimination and abuse of power. It's like, you're a person of color driving expensive sports car. You are going to get pulled over, especially as a black male, because I've been in the car with my father or my brother. But when you have enough of these experiences and data points, especially at particularly influenceable chapters of life, it's really difficult to not start to have a little bit of. I wouldn't even call it resentment. It's just disgust. And I know that's a strong word, but, I mean, after the events of these last few months, I feel confident in saying that's literally what it is.

So, I think having an extended period of time and a culture that I identified with and felt accepted in, it really was the last piece of the puzzle where I realized this is not the last time that I'm going to be not just in Brazil, but out of the country for as long as I can. Yeah, it was a really special period for me. Definitely was hard, like, certain points, because at the end of the day, no matter how Brazilian I feel or don't feel, there is a line just by not growing up in that world. I had one or two local friends, but there are certain places where they wouldn't necessarily invite me. If the level of Portuguese was very high and social, there was a line. And so that was a little tough because I wanted so bad to be fully accepted. But I think that's just a part of life.

Matt Bowles: I want to ask about how your studying of the history of U.S. foreign policy in Central and South America and the extent of the human rights abuses that the U.S. was involved with their shaped your global perspective. So, for example, as you continued then to travel around the world to other regions, I know you've spent a lot of time in Southeast Asia. What types of things were you interested in and attentive to in terms of U.S. foreign policy history in Southeast Asia?

Taylor Wallace: What I do is anytime I'm visiting a new city, I'll always do their free walking tour. And they will inevitably touch on a little bit of everything and what happened. And for sure, more so in certain regions of the world than others, they would mention a certain dictator. Like, look at the facade of this building. It's still covered in all the bullet holes that were part of the coup where we saw this leader overthrown by the U.S. Backed like. It's like a theme that just kept coming up. And so, my genuine interest and passion for history, it's like, okay, clearly this is a defining part of this country's evolution. I got to know the majority of the time, that was how I ended up getting really deep on the influence of America in these different places. Like, so in Ho Chi Minh, it's like the American War, blah, blah. I'm like, the American. Oh, shit, the Vietnam War. Oh, my God. And Vietnam War. What else do I not know? What other information have I been taught that's incorrect? That was the motivation for I got to see this museum.

And I went to the American War Museum in Ho Chi Minh. And afterwards, I didn't talk to anybody for two days. It took a long time to just process. Not only was it fucked just as fundamentally, but being able to see the explicit contradictions between what we were told or taught in school and these factual, tangible things that disprove certain narratives. A lot of the stuff on Agent Orange, a lot of the stuff on things

recovered from massacred villages, the women and children, it was just really real. And this is post College. So, I had already written a 25-page paper on a lot of the shadow side of American Influence and it still shook me to my core.

Matt Bowles: All right, we're going to pause here and call that the end of Part one for direct links to everything we have discussed in this episode, including all the ways to find, follow and connect with Taylor. That is all going to be linked up in [the show notes](#). So, you can just go to one place at themaverickshow.com go to [the show notes](#) for this episode and there you will find it. And be sure to tune in to the next episode to hear part two of my interview with Taylor Wallace. Good night, everybody.