

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining



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With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

[The Art School Podcast](#) with Leah Badertscher

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

In today's episode of *The Art School Podcast*, I want to invite you to join me for a special 40-day practice that will put an end to the number one way I guarantee you're self-sabotaging and holding yourself back. And instead, this practice will put you on a hyper-accelerated and beautiful track to everything you've ever wanted and wanted to be.

You are listening to *The Art School Podcast*, a show for artists and creatives who want to become the next greatest version of themselves. Learn how to cultivate an extraordinary way of being and take the mystery out of making money, and the struggle out of making art. Here is your host, master certified life coach, artist, and former lawyer, Leah Badertscher.

Hey there, all you beautiful and creative geniuses. How are you? And really, I mean that; how are you? Did it make you a little uncomfortable to be called beautiful, to be called a creative genius? Did you think, maybe some of her listeners are, but she's not talking to me, I'm just average old me?

So I want you to really pause and think about what your reaction to that introduction is and what your answer to my question is when I ask, how are you doing? Because it's very related to today's topic, and if you need a reminder from last week, I talked about how I'm recording this in May and I have declared this the month of May-yay; a month of celebration and really focusing on elevating our energy, elevating it really every opportunity you have.

So, as I mentioned in last week's episode, I wanted to give you, in the month of May, this gift of a glorious month. And the best way I know how to do that is to empower you by sharing the tools and practices, some of my favorites, and the most powerful ones I know, about how to create an extraordinary way of being that inevitably leads to extraordinary results.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

So I want to set the stage for today's topic by asking you to take a moment and call to mind, again, your greatest vision or dream for your life, what currently is your greatest vision and dream for your life. So call that to mind. Get inside that. Look around. Be in your body, embodying your future self, that greatest expression and version of yourself within that greatest vision and dream for your life.

And then I want you to notice what's not present in that vision. What would you not have at that frequency? Because I don't have to be a psychic or a mind-reader or even very intuitive to know that one thing that is absent in our greatest visions for ourselves, for our lives, is chronic constant complaining and an overwhelming sense of negativity.

But here's the trick, guys. Here is the profound nuance that most of the world misses and that you all are aware of if you've been following me or have been on another path of heightening your self-awareness and self-development and becoming creatively empowered. And that is, you know that in that vision of your future self, if there is more peace and calm, it is not because of the money you have in the bank or the accolades or the accomplishments.

If you are working on dream projects, it's not because somehow someone else came and tapped you on the shoulder and anointed you and chose you. You know that you are who you are in that vision because you decided to see yourself that way. You know that, if you have an absence of negativity and an absence of self-inflicted suffering, it's because you have done that inner work of pruning back those neural pathways that perpetuate negative spirals and negative bias.

And instead, you have been gently, lovingly, wisely cultivating the pathways that promote your ability to be a creative powerhouse. And really, as I've talked in earlier episodes, to be a miracle-worker, someone who looks at a situation and accepts it, does not resign themselves or become a victim or

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

throw up their hands, who says that, yes, this is difficult, this is painful, maybe this even sucks or I'm experiencing this as incredibly painful right now. And also, where is the lesson this for me? Where can I use this to deepen my understanding of all humanity? Where can I use this to deepen my creative powers, to heighten my intuition, to strengthen my compassion, to strengthen my resilience, and where can I really believe and know that this is absolutely part of the path and this is a very necessary part of the journey, just as important as getting to that end result and destination?

Because I want to make this distinction clear, when I talk about abstaining from complaining, I'm not talking about just putting your head in a hole and pretending that you're not thinking the thoughts you are thinking or you're not having a reaction to situations to which you are truly having a reaction. I'm not asking you to lie to yourself. I'm asking you to elevate your energy by taking a more conscious and empowered approach.

We do that by first knowing what's going on up in our mind, but then also realizing that we have two options. We have the option of remaining a victim to external circumstances, of giving our power away to external circumstances. Or we have option of knowing and taking responsibility and understanding that a negative experience begins in our consciousness. It begins with us interpreting an external event and assigning a certain meaning or story to it, and that that meaning or story, thought or thoughts, then create a feeling within us, then create that experience within us.

And if we're complaining, it's an experience of negativity. If we are complaining, then we are evaluating, judging, an external circumstance as somehow being different from an expectation of how we thought it should be, and then we're giving that external circumstance falling short of our expectations then all the power in how we feel.

So again, when we complain, that complaining creates a feeling. It creates a feeling of something being wrong in the world. And when we practice a

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

thought that's a complaint over and over again, that creates a sustained feeling of negativity within us. And a sustained feeling of negativity within us, when complaining just becomes automatic for us, becomes a really bad habit, then means complaining creates feelings over and over again.

Those sustained feelings then become a mood. And then a sustained mood of negativity then becomes an attitude. And a sustained attitude of negativity then becomes this generalized feeling or filter, perspective we have about life and even who we are. But it becomes so ingrained within us that we don't even see it as a filter. We see it as the truth.

And this is the number one blind spot that I see people coming to me with over and over again and because it is the number one blind spot, it is also the number one thing that people do to themselves, i.e. self-sabotage, that keeps them stuck. They complain as if they are just telling the truth, as if they are just telling me the facts.

And then, when we deep dive down into it and dissect it and analyze it, we can see that most of the time, 90% of it is not truth. 90% of it is interpretation, goes back to this evaluation that happened in our consciousness about how something outside fell short of their expectations and they use that interpretation or story to put a negative spin on it, and oftentimes, a negative spin about what's possible for them and what they're capable of.

So why did I choose talking about complaining and going complaint-free in this month of May-yay, in this month that is all about me wanting to help you create a magnificent and glorious month, and really maybe even make some quantum leaps and really move the needle in terms of cultivating your own extraordinary way of being?

Well, I chose to talk about complaining because I think it is one of those things that is an absolute difference-maker and changes your whole life

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

trajectory. And also, it's a difference that is a quantum leap, and it also then, like most things that are true and real, requires these small consistent daily practices.

And I also want to make sure that you know, as you practice this, as you practice pruning away the neural pathways that have made complaining a default in your mind, that may have made a negative bias the filter by which you see the world, and we'll talk about really how all of our brains are wired that way in a moment. As you do this practice, I want you to remember to be so very kind and loving and gentle with yourself because it's just going to reinforce your complaining and your negative bias if you feel negative and complaining about the fact that you're negative and complaining.

But if you can just see it as something that our human brain does, it actually was essential to our survival for thousands and thousands of years. If you can see it as something that's non-personal and not take it as a character flaw but instead think of yourself as this constant and gentle loving gardener who just sees a weed and pulls it up and instead plants seeds intentionally, waters, nurtures, sees a weed and pulls it up.

And again, every time a complaint comes up, you don't have to think, oh there I go, I have an urge to complain again or I did it again. You can instead leverage that and use it to your advantage and use it as this opportunity, like a timer going off on your watch or like the bells that would toll to tell the monks when to pray. Use it as an invitation to instead practice gratitude and to instead catch yourself in the act.

Notice how complaining makes you feel in your body without judgment, and again, find something to be grateful for because those are two very distinct vibrations that cannot exist simultaneously. If you are feeling grateful, you are not complaining. And if you are complaining, you are not feeling grateful. Those things don't exist simultaneously.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

Also, complaining and creativity do not exist simultaneously, whereas gratitude and creativity do. Because think back for a moment to that vision exercise I had you do at the beginning of the episode where I had you call to mind a vision of you thriving – get inside your mind and eavesdrop on yourself and your thoughts, your inner dialogue, the running narrative in that vision of your dream life, and I guarantee you are not saying, “Oh gosh, another day, here we go, man am I dreading what’s going on today? And would you look at the weather and would you look at everything on my calendar?”

Instead, I bet you’re saying, “I love this, I’m so grateful this is my life. I’m so excited about this day.” And challenges that are there, you’re like, yeah, bring it on, this is what I’m good at, this is what I’m made for. I love doing this. even the hard things, they make me come alive. They give me something to apply myself to and apply my wisdom and genius to. And I love that this is where I am in the world and what I get to do and experience.

And again, the thing is, you do not have to, nor can you even wait, for those physical manifestations of your dream life to appear in order to start enjoying and loving inhabiting the inside of your mind and inhabiting your life right now. And you know, I talk so much to my clients about how part of creating an extraordinary way of being and part of creating those extraordinary results in your life is learning how to be someone who takes extraordinary care of herself.

And if you think of everything that we know today about the importance of knowing what goes into our body and how different things affect different people and just how someone with celiac disease shouldn’t eat wheat if they don’t want some disastrous consequences, consuming complaint and having an inner life that sustains on negativity and complaint, likewise, has these disastrous consequences. And it is just not a way that you practice

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

taking extraordinary care of yourself. It is the antithesis of that. It's not kind to yourself.

And I often reframe it to people as saying complaining is not something that you just do. It's something that you do to yourself. I think, a lot of times, we think it has no consequence, but it does. It is something that you do to yourself and it's not kind. It makes things harder. It creates actually more resistance in your life.

If you think back to the previous episode where I talked about the path of least resistance, complaining creates more unnecessary resistance in your life because every single time you set up some sort of obstacle in the world and then assign it more power and then you tell another part of yourself, "Hey that's what you have to overcome out there in the world if you want to make it," and you also at the same time disempower yourself. So it's a double whammy.

What's more, complaining is truly an unhealthy bad habit. There was recently a short article in the Daily Health Post – and I'll have a link to this in the show notes – entitled, *How Complaining Physically Rewires Your Brain to Be Anxious and Depressed*.

So if going complaint-free because of all the reasons I give you for how it's going to empower your life and help you to thrive isn't inspiration enough to give it a try, listen to this quote, "People who routinely experience chronic stress, particularly acute, even traumatic stress, release the hormone cortisol, which literally eats away almost like an acid bath and the hippocampus, which is a part of the brain that is very engaged in visual spatial memory as well as memory for context and setting," explains Rick Hanson, PhD, a psychologist and senior fellow of The Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

So this article is talking about how negativity physically destroys our brain and how complaining causes us to focus on problems so that things become a negative spiral and eventually we start to see the negative side of everything in life, and that this negativity releases cortisol, not because of an inherent situation, but because of our interpretation of the situation.

So again here, here's where you're invited to walk that fine line and hold this place of paradox where knowing that complaining eats your brain while also not beating yourself up or feeling negative about that, but again, turning to that gentle compassionate loving way of being and deciding, you know what, I've decided I'm someone who takes extraordinary care of themselves. I have decided that I am someone who has high standards for how she or he treats themselves in their life. And now that I understand that complaining is not just something that I do with no consequence but it's actually something I do to myself, now that I know better, I'm going to do better.

And it's going to be a process and it's going to be an ongoing process, but I can inhabit that energy of the wise loving constant gentle gardener and I'm going to make progress every day. And every day I'm going to have setbacks, and that's okay. And every day, I'm going to gently return to creating new progress with this time and awareness and this consistent wise loving disciplined practice. I'm going to begin to rewire the neural pathways in my brain. I'm going to begin to wire them away from sustaining a negative bias and in favor of creating more positivity and more possibility and in favor of creating a mindset that looks at every circumstance for the wisdom in it and for a capacity to allow the full 50-50 of the human condition.

I'm going to approach things with greater wisdom and greater wisdom is going to come from that approach. I'm going to look at every challenge and opportunity as an opportunity to become the greatest most powerfully creative version of myself. And when I feel myself tempted to pick up that

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

old ball of yarn and vent or complain, I'm just going to gently put it down and ask myself, is there another way I can approach this? What is a way of approaching this other than complaining?

There's this great quote from the writer Carlos Castenada that speaks to this. And he writes, "The trick is in what one emphasizes. We either make ourselves miserable or we make ourselves strong. The amount of work is the same." And I do love that, so on point, and then not entirely quite right given what we now know about the brain.

We know that our brain does have this negative bias that evolved over thousands of years from when we were hunters and gatherers and needed to have these survival instincts to avoid danger. But the thing is, the nuance here is for us to understand that we do have both options available to us, both options being we can make ourselves miserable or we can make ourselves strong.

Where I think it's a little bit off is that, in the beginning, the amount of work isn't the same because in the beginning, any repetitive thought that we've had over and over again is going to take some more focus and energy for us to rewire that. But the thing is – and it will also require some discomfort because, as crazy as it sounds, if you challenge your identity in any way, even if it's you've come to the realization that you're actually a more negative person than you thought and you think, oh god I don't want to continue down that path, I want to be a more positive and resilient optimistic person, that's still an identity crisis. And that's still identity ego-shattering and so your brain is going to resist that because that creates cognitive dissonance.

That's going to require precious brain energy to overcome it and our brains are wired to conserve energy and go the fastest shortest route along those pre-paved neural pathways. So if you've been pre-paving negativity and then you try to go complaint-free and create a more positive creatively

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

empowered outlook, it's like heading off the expressway and then taking the cross-country route where there's not even a road and you're just bumping over open fields.

So it's going to take some time and energy until those positive resilient creatively empowered neural pathways become more like the expressway. So the thing is, it might be hard. It might require – it will require – a lot more energy and intention. And you can do it. You can totally do it. It is available to you. And if you want to edify yourself for the journey, adopt a growth mindset, read that book again. Think about, what are you giving your intention to?

Know that you can have a growth mindset and then align yourself with all kinds of support. Get a coach. Get a community. Listen to podcasts like this or others. Just know that the fact that it's hard or requires work is not a reason not to do it.

You could use it as a reason to not do it, but make sure you like that reason because, the thing is, as one of my mentors, Brooke Castillo, loves to say, you know, you're going to be uncomfortable either way, whether you change or not change. So you might as well go with the way that gets you the result you want and go with that flavor of discomfort.

I also wanted to spend a little bit of time today sharing with you some of the insights I've gained from my own evolution as a creative person and as a coach, and then also from what's not thousands of hours coaching others, especially other creatives and people with really big dreams.

So, some of the pushback or resistance I get to this going complaint-free is then people say, well then do I just turn a blind eye to the things in the world that bother me? Do I just become insensitive or practice fake it until I make it? And I say no, because I know that anybody who has worked with

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

me knows how important, fundamentally vitally important it is to me that I hold a space for all of everything that everyone is experiencing.

There is nothing that's too deep or off the table or that people might feel too ashamed about, I hold a space for it all and I really believe in the importance of putting it out all on the table and looking at it all. And I'm also a very sensitive person and I don't – I'm not an ostrich with my head in the sand. There are things in the world that I care about deeply.

And it's because I care about things in the world so deeply that I have a discipline myself and I am not perfect. I am a work in progress, but I am so committed to this discipline of continuing to prune away the ways in which I disempower myself and the ways in which I am ungrateful and not taking responsibility by complaining, because I see complaining as ingratitude. I see complaining as turning a blind eye to what I can do. I see complaining as being delusional about what reality really is and not moving anyone forward, not doing myself – complaining is doing myself a disservice and also doing the rest of the world a disservice.

To me, complaining is the opposite of creation. It stands on the sidelines and it yells and it condemns and it shouts and it makes these self-righteous proclamations, but it actually does nothing. It accomplishes nothing. And what's worse is while accomplishing nothing, it does make one feel as if something is being accomplished in that moment. It gives you this little hit of satisfaction or dopamine that actually you did something, like in a videogame when you conquered a world but you actually didn't conquer a world.

And yet, nothing actually improves and no value is added to the world. In fact, you've just done the opposite. You have just leaked out part of that built up pressure, that creative, that potential energy that could have helped you change something; change something for yourself for the better, or change something in the world for the better.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

I often talk to people about – and this is a whole other topic I could do a year podcast on this – when we have blocks or dammed up creative potential. And then sometimes, we feel that intense build up, so we'll complain about things in our life. We'll assign excuses or assign responsibility to others for why we are not being who we are called to be in the world. And when we complain in the moments like that, it's like a little pressure valve, like on your Instapot, like a little hiss, where it lets off some of that steam and relieves some of that pressure.

But you needed that pressure and instead of using that pressure that, from the inside, is actually a benevolent force, it feels so uncomfortable sometimes to be holding that backlog of potential creative energy. And so, when you're so frustrated, maybe at yourself for not doing something about it and you complain about something in the world being the reason why you aren't happy or why you're not doing what you want to do, you let off a little pressure, so you feel a little better momentarily. So that's one more time when you actually don't do something to change your life and to move it in a different pathway.

You feel better, so you get this instant gratification of relief, but nothing has actually changed. But part of your brain feels like something has been changed because you have that relief feeling. You have some good chemical release and then the brain is like – it shifts away from creative mode and into, well great, we don't have to even think about that problem anymore, we're just going to then now shift into an automatic mode.

And then over time, like I mentioned before, shifting into that mode where complaining just lets off a little pressure and a little pressure and a little pressure ultimately disempowers you so that you're in this spiral of that's who you are. You're somebody who complains and becomes down and anxious and depressed, as we become and we feel that we are at the mercy of the external world. And you start to see the world that way and

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

yourself that way, instead of knowing yourself to be who you truly are; creative and powerful.

It's like almost drinking to make a hangover headache go away. Complaining doesn't change the situation, it just perpetuates it. And complaining is condemning, and there is no remedy in condemnation. Again, it feels like you're being productive. It feels like somehow the struggle has been mitigated or solved even in the moment. It somehow feels even satisfying, but it's actually doing a disservice and even harming you if you think about what it's doing to your brain, because being in that state of, again, where that acid is eating away at your hippocampus and also being in just that spiritual state and energy where you complain, you're basically making a statement of condemnation, you're condemning yourself in your current state of being as being not as powerful as something in the outside world, not being powerful enough to change it and not being powerful enough to be grateful for what you can do.

But the truth is that if you're listening to this and you have a mind, you have everything you need and you are capable of anything. Two areas where complaining comes up so much and my clients come to me presenting this so much that I want to make sure to share it with you so that you have the opportunity to see if this is a place where you're self-sabotaging or holding yourself back and so then you can, today, begin to chart another course and pave another path is when clients come to me and they have these big beautiful audacious goals and then somehow things – they take action but it's not enough. Whatever they do, whatever their results are, are not enough.

And the second one is when they come with just an overall mindset that's really they're negatively framing everything and once again they just don't see it that way. They see it as if they're just telling the truth of the matter and reporting the news and they don't see the negative filter they have overlaid to all of the facts and how terribly toxic this is to them and how

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

much it disempowers them and really undermines any of their big beautiful goals.

The other pattern implicit in both of these patterns around not enough, whether it's money or results or an accomplishment, or around the chronic complaining and victimhood and self-pity is that what is implicit in that is a constant reference to the past. Well, I wasn't able to do this before. Well I didn't make money before.

When you, again, recall your vision, you have to source your thoughts from the greatest version of yourself, from the greatest vision you have for your life if you want to be truly creative and you want to stop defaulting to the past and just recycling your old thoughts, which are just going to recycle old actions and feelings and recreate old results for you. If you are indulging in complaining, essentially you are endorsing the belief that the external world creates your life.

So that's one option, one way of being in the world, but it's not a creative way of being in the world and it's not a powerful way of being in the world. Instead, if you want to be creative and you want to be a creative powerhouse, if you want to really see what you're capable of in this lifetime and blow your own mind, here is the other option. You get evidence of what you believe.

It is so deeply ingrained in us that we don't even see it as a choice, but you really do have a choice. I think sometimes we are predisposed to complain because it gives us a greater security that we won't be disappointed and that therefore we also won't be wrong. We won't have been wrong about ourselves, we won't have been wrong about what we believe we're capable of or the world. And so we disappoint ourselves ahead of time by just complaining, by setting up this false sense of insurance.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

And then the really interesting thing is that when people adopt that approach that somehow they're being wiser or that they're more hardened or a realist because they are taking that more negative approach, as opposed to someone who is just sure they're going to make it in the world, they just know their dream is inevitable.

But here is what I know; I am so much stronger and more resilient and vulnerable. I have my eyes wide open and I am not afraid of experiencing the whole range of emotions because I choose to reframe everything in terms of how is this working for me, how is this working for me, how do I know that my result is inevitable? How do I know that I am already that woman now?

And that creates an incredible sense of vulnerability and I'm okay with that. And that incredible sense of vulnerability, I know I have gained so much strength from that, whereas saying, well it's probably just not meant for me, artists don't make that much money, or most life coaches don't make that much money, or who do I think I am? That would give me some sort of clear but delusional excuse to get back in my cave and never have to risk anything. Complaint tries to convince you that you don't need to risk anything because it's really outside your control anyway.

In a moment, I'm going to get to the coach with me segment. And right now, I just want to give you just three of the many ways that I know doing this complaint-free 40-day practice will revolutionize your life from the inside out.

Abstaining from complaining reframes your mindset and empowers you. You literally rewire your brain from being a heat-seeking missile for everything that is wrong out there in the world and then explodes upon impact at finding it. And instead, when you abstain from complaining, you become empowered again. So you become empowered to see things as

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

neutral circumstances that you have the ability to choose the interpretation or story or meaning that you assign to those situations.

Second, from this place, from this empowered place, you can get into better communication with deeper sources of wisdom, your own intuition, or the wisdom of the collective consciousness or higher consciousness about why the situation has captivated your attention. It may very well – it likely does – want your attention for a reason. So give it the highest quality attention you have. Don't just distract yourself or brush it away with that pressure valve release of complaining.

Ask it why it's there. And then third, you can leverage that for a purpose that serves your highest self and the greater good. So maybe you create a solution, maybe you grow and evolve personally.

In my own life, I know one very specific way. I have many ways, but this is one very specific story in which this has served me in seeing that creativity and complaining are at opposite ends of the power spectrum and that the creative response is the opposite of condemnation, while at the same time it doesn't condone something but feels very deeply about things in the world, pain and injustice and tragedy is that there was a time several years ago, it was the year of the Sandy Hook tragedy and the year too of the Boston Marathon bombing.

And my heart and soul just felt shattered by this and shaking and so, you know, it was about a month after first there was Sandy Hook and then there was Boston and just all sorts of other things going on in the world at that time and I thought, what is to be my response to this? Because I want to condemn it, but that doesn't feel like strength to me. It doesn't feel right. It doesn't feel like love. It doesn't feel like it actually accomplishes much.

So I meditated about it and I prayed about it and what I heard is, fill life with beauty. And it was one of those things that you hear that means so much

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

more than just those four words and will probably continue to reveal itself in many ways. But one way that I've interpreted that and that I interpreted it at the time was what can you do, what is yours to do? What did you come here to do?

And a response to this was, for me, to fill life with beauty, to get back to the work and the love that's mine to do, my art, because I do believe that art heals; not in this pretty ephemeral but doesn't really make any difference sense that people kind of brush off. I truly believe that when you put art from a loving place, a place of love with a capital L out into the world, that that's more love in the world and that that truly is an energy that's needed and necessary and that does powerfully affect the world and that our creativity and us being where we are, knowing who we are, doing what we're meant to do on purpose and with love is a powerful healing force in the world, even when you are feeling so heartbroken or beating down, to instead decide to fill life with beauty, to fill life with love.

And one particular specific way that I expressed that at that time was I did this painting. And it was an intuitive painting and I'd started it and I saw this angel in it that was crouched as if grieving, as if heartbroken over these tragedies, but then also as if gathering strength, and you know, her wings were not broken, ready to take flight again. And there were other things in this painting, like images of a mother holding a child that was wrapped up in the wings and this sense of, yes, this is life.

There's so much pain and there's heartbreak and it's not just new to these times. It's not just because of gun violence, but it's ongoing. And who knows why it's the 50-50? And yes, there's pain and yes, there's also beauty, and yes, we need to gather our strength and do the work that's ours to do, fill life with beauty.

So for you, instead of complaining, be quiet for a moment. Gather your strength and ask for wisdom and insight. What am I to do here instead of

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

complaining? I have a higher purpose. There is a deeper meaning to my life; what am I meant to do here? And then do that thing and know that that is a radical act of creativity, love, and healing.

So, this now brings me to the part of the podcast where I want you to do more than just listen. I want you to lean in, really take this information and make it transformational, make it work in your life, because you didn't come here just to struggle and complain. You came here to see what you're capable of. You came here to experience the full range of the human experience, but also to soar. So, let's do that.

And the first thing we do if we're going to soar is, we let go of that way we are tethered to complaints. And here's the thing; nature abhors a vacuum and you will go towards what you're focused on, so you do have to have something intentional to focus on. So that's why the first thing that is on your list of assignments today, should you choose to accept it, is to – in the words of Blaise Pascal – always have something beautiful in mind.

And I am such a believer in having a vision and coming back to it again and again, having a vision of you thriving, and then constantly talk about that. So you notice how easy it is and you'll see it even more now that we've talked about it. You'll go out in public and it's so easy for people to default to what's wrong or what's wrong with the weather, or even just default to kind of a middle ground, things are busy, they're fine.

But why not have our default be what's amazing in or life right now? What's amazing in our life right now in what we're building and what we're looking forward to? So right now, I'm putting the finishing touches on the first of my summer workshop series that starts next week. It's about visioning and then about creating that vision. And I want you to have a vision that is so beautiful and so magnetic and so exciting to you that you obsess about it, you're captivated by it and that you're constantly wanting to talk about this and that you're so in the heightened energy of this beautiful amazing vision

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

of what you're creating and of who you're becoming in order to create that that you feel that overwhelmingly and that you then start to sense the great dissonance when you drop down the notches you have to drop down to complain. Because over time, that is so self-correcting, you won't want to drop down.

So then that's going to bring you naturally to number two, pruning back the complaining. And I see one place that then comes up for people around this pruning back the complaining is all of a sudden a realization of how much connection with others in their life revolves around complaining or doing this middle ground, life's okay, busy, doing well with the kids, blah, blah, blah business, or even just devolves and spirals downward into outright kind off bitch and moan misery loves company kind of conversations.

So what you can do there is one, nothing. You can be quiet. And does that feel awkward? Maybe. It's interesting for sure, but I promise you, over time, you'll either think of something better to talk about if you can't find anything in that moment, or you'll have to ask your brain over and over again to come up with better things to talk about or you'll have to think ahead of time, what do I love talking with this person about? What can I remark to them about that I see as beautiful in their own life without being preachy and annoying and Pollyannaish? Or what can you bring to the table that you're excited about?

And if that creates an awkward silence too, so be it. But at least now you are deciding the plain of truth at which you want to operate. And just notice that pull, that tribal pull to maybe come back down to complaining and you can begin to prune it by just not saying anything. So that old adage, if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all, truly over time when you just don't give into the urge to complain, that urge will die off and go away.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

And either you will have those connections become more beautiful and meaningful because you will be meeting people at an entirely different level, or you will find other people to have connections with. But there may be, if you go back to my last episode about creative community, there might be some empty elevator time. And that's okay, but don't inflict complaining upon yourself and don't undermine your dreams for the cheap connection of complaining. And also, again, that being said, if you do, don't be so hard on yourself.

And also, for god's sake, don't judge your friends and loved ones for complaining and don't say, "Hey guys, I'm going complaint-free, want to do this 40-day complaint-free practice with me?" Just do it for yourself because again, they're great the way they are. They're on their path and this is all for you. You are doing this for you.

So the third thing you'll want to do is also to proactively have a constructive intentional practice around how you process negative thoughts and negative emotions, maybe things in the past that you would have wanted to complain about. And if you think about, well what are the things I usually vent about? Ask yourself.

Go to that place where you access your deepest wisdom and your truth and say what am I being called to here? How am I being meant to answer this thing that has captivated my attention, that wants my attention? I don't just want to do that pressure valve release of complaint anymore. I don't want to indulge in complaining.

So what that might look like for you is like a thought download practice. You can reference my How to Develop a Creative Mindset podcast for more information on that. It could be morning pages. It could be working with a coach, talking with somebody who is compassionate but also constructive and doesn't just let you wallow in self-pity or complaining but who really wants you to be able to be seen for everything that you are and everything

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

that you're thinking, and also then help you move beyond that to create what you want to create.

There was this meme that I saw several weeks ago about, you know, thank god for the friends that have heard you complain about the same thing for the last 20 years or heard you talk about doing the same thing for the last 20 years. And I thought, no. No, I don't want my friends to do that. I would want my friends to call me on that.

I would want my friends to say, "Hey Leah, I love you way too much, you don't want to complain." I would want them to say, "Hey, quit giving your power away." And I do think those are the sort of friends I have that would do that from a loving place. So find someone to talk to who can hold a space for everything, can hold a space to allow you to say what's on your mind and then also loves you unconditionally and knows the difference between you and your thoughts and can hold a space as well for your greatest vision of yourself and can help reflect and mirror back to you what your truth is that you want to decide upon on purpose.

Fourth and finally, have a script for yourself for when difficult or negative emotions and reactions come up. Here are some suggestions. Here are things that I use or offer to clients. Yes, this is hard, or this feels hard or painful right now. Maybe, yes, this even sucks right now. And also, what is the lesson in this? I know there is one. How can I use this to become a stronger more resilient more compassionate mature wise enriched more creative person?

Catch yourself gently in moments of complaint and just say, "Hey, I'm grateful I caught that. I can turn this around because I know the antidotes are celebration of life and gratitude and that every time I do this, every single time, I become a stronger magic and miracle worker, an alchemist, by asking how is this happening for me?"

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

Thank you so much for joining me for another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode, I'd love to hear from you. You can email me at leah@leahcb.com and it would also be awesome if you'd leave an iTunes review.

If you love this material and content and you want to take it deeper – as one of my clients likes to say, this is not the kiddie pool, y'all, we're swimming out in the middle of the ocean and it's wonderful. So if you'd like to be in a constructive community where everyone is holding a big enough space for all the things that we have going on in our lives and everyone is also holding a big enough space for those blue sky moonshot visions and dreams, then you'll want to hop on my mailing list and be the first to know about the latest offerings from *The Art School*.

We have a summer workshop series. And while my private coaching practice is currently full, I do have a waitlist and I will have another opening coming up mid-June, and then on, maybe two more early July. So if you're on the list, you'll be in the know about all of that as well.

So, to close this podcast, I mentioned in last week's that, in celebration of this month of May, that my mantra for May is that I love you and there's nothing you can do about it. so I just want to repeat that for the whole month of May so that you don't forget, so that you hear it again and again and so that you're reminded to use it in your own life again and again.

I love you and there's nothing you can do about it. And if you'd like to get some extra love and support for that vision you have of you thriving and for joining in on this 40-day complaint-free practice, then join our free Facebook group or find me on Instagram. All these links will be in the show notes. So please, reach out, connect, and we can have a conversation and keep the conversation going that we start in these podcasts.

Ep #27: Abstaining from Complaining

Thank you all so much again for being here. Have an awesome week. I'll see you next time.