

## Ep #32: The Artist Date



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Leah Badertscher**

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

## Ep #32: The Artist Date

“There are two pivotal tools in creative recovery; the morning pages and the artist date. A lasting creative awakening requires that consistent uses of both.” Julia Cameron, *The Artist’s Way*.

In last week’s podcast, I talked about giving yourself all that you require. This week, I have a very specific and nonnegotiable prescription if you want to do just that; give yourself the gift of a lasting creative awakening by using the artist date.

I know you might be doubtful or thinking that you don’t have the time, the money, or other resources to give this to yourself. But listen in because today I want to talk to you about how the artist date works. It leads to greater creative fulfillment and life fulfillment. Find a way to make artist dates a regular part of your life and a nonnegotiable part of your creative process, and soon you’ll see, you’ll stop asking yourself, “How can I afford this,” and you’ll know, “I can’t afford not to do this.”

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.

Hello, all you beautiful creative people. Welcome back. How are you? How is your summer going? How has your week been? This is where descriptive, this binary way we talk about good and bad just sort of fails me, and interesting doesn’t come close.

My husband and I were going to go to Aspen for a getaway, and while my parents watched the kids in Iowa, we had a kind of – very, not kind of – very scary beginning of a flight which resulted in a semi-emergency landing. And everyone is well. I’m very grateful for that.

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And then we decided, you know what, we're going to cancel our trip and just spend those days with our family, with our children and my family in Iowa, which was wonderful. And we got home then and found out that something had gotten into our henhouse and took six of our 11 chickens. So that was a bad day at the Badertscher farm. And I grew up on a farm, so I have been well acquainted with the circle of life, as you are exposed to that as a young child, and how heartbreaking it can be. And then also, you realize how attached you get to your animals.

So yeah, so I was hugging my babies last night and they cried themselves to sleep and I thought, what am I supposed to think here? Because the mind likes back and forth, it likes this way or that. And so grateful that our plane flight ended safely and that I get to be the one, like, comforting my babies while they're experiencing these little heartbreaks in their life. And for sure, I too, am very fond, love these chickens. It sounds kind of silly, but true.

And so then I was just wondering, it's interesting, the intersection of these two experiences in one week, one where we were really in a situation where we were concerned about this plane might go down. And obviously, it didn't. It's scenarios like that, though, that right away remind you very quickly that planes do go down and we do eventually die for one reason or another. And then you compare that to a raccoon or a fox ate our chickens and they are like my kids' pets and our family's pets. And they're not humans, in the grand scheme of things, but it's still heartbreak.

So, what does any of all of this have to do with you and this podcast, which is about helping you make your life work and expanding your creativity, because I know that expands your life in fulfilling your dreams and your creative desires, because I know that fulfills your life and leads to a thriving life.

So I thought about, do I even share this story on this podcast? But I'm going with it, partly just because of my gut, partly because I've heard from

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so many more of you that it makes me realize that I have a relationship with you. And I want it to be a real one, and that requires some vulnerability on my part and sharing my scary plane story and our little chicken sadness here, because this is all of life and it's also the things that happen is week are part of – a great part of – why I do this work.

Because yes, I am so much for you making the money that you can make, all of it, for making your art that you dream of making, all of it, for experiencing all the things in life. And then I also want to let you know that what supports me, a living breathing human being on the other side of things here and why I got into coaching in the first place is because every day we're faced with things, we go through things that are not easy and that scare us and break our hearts, and how do we be human and be the best humans we can be and care for other humans through this process?

So I do talk so much about creativity and success mindset and developing an extraordinary psychology. And ultimately, it is really because all of these things lead me back to the same place. Like, how do we love better and live better? And so while being shaken up this week and while comforting my children from being shaken up through these little heartbreaks, it's all the same thing. I'm doing all the same thing. I'm questioning and finding my ways to the answers or waiting in the abyss of the unknown for a while about how do we live better and how do we love better, especially when this don't go well.

Because I certainly also want to make sure to celebrate with you everything to be celebrated, including, yay, safe plane landing. And I also want you to know, obviously, I'm a very real human being and I didn't get into coaching because I found a manual somewhere or I'm perfect and have everything figured out, but it's because I feel things deeply and I don't want to shut that off. I want to learn how to stay awake and connected to the world, and then also again, love better and live better and share everything that I'm fascinated with and all the best things I have known with you.

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So it might seem like then today's topic, the artist date, might seem trivial in contrast to these big life or death situations, or maybe, depending on how much you love animals, these smaller life or death ones, but it's really not. And so I think it's perfect that today I'm talking about the artist date because a lot of people poo-poo this tool or this practice, and I know I have been one of those people.

I don't want you to be one of those people because I think Julia Cameron's choice of words in that quote I shared with you in the intro, that there are two pivotal tools and that a lasting creative awakening requires the consistent use of both. Lasting creative awakening requires the consistent use of both. And she said these are the two main tools, so don't write them off.

If you want a creative awakening and if you want everything that comes with that, just being more awake to your life – because as I've said before, *The Art School*, my coaching, is not just for people who identify themselves as artists. It is all about creating life from a higher consciousness. It is about connecting to your highest self your deepest truth and creating from that place and not living from a place of default.

So whether you are a CEO and managing, you know, a multi-million dollar business and thousands of people, or maybe a staff of 20 that's making your show go, or whether you are a painter, or a writer, or a playwright, or an actor, or a dancer, give yourself this gift. As I was saying last week, so much of what I see when people come and they are blocked or stuck or not getting the results that they could be getting, it's because they haven't had enough inflow. And that artist date is one way of giving yourself that creative infusion, that inflow.

And again, I'm talking about creativity with a capital C, because I see it as this really invisible force life energy that comes into us when we allow ourselves to engage with this aspect of ourselves, when we remember and recognize that we have this creative aspect, whether you want to call it your

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inner artist or just this very innately creative part of you that is always connected to that higher self and that deeper wisdom. When you have a relationship with that, you have more life force available to you. You have more energy available to you. You have more of your own potential and the great vast potential out there available to you, but you have to plug into it.

Morning pages, one way of doing that, artist date, another way of doing that. It's a state of great receivership and play. I want to read you another excerpt from *The Artist's Way*. I love the way that Julia Cameron talks about this, "Think of this combination of tools..." and she means the morning pages and the artist date, "And terms of a radio receiver and transmitter. It is a two-step, two-directional process; out and then in. Doing your morning pages, you are sending, notifying yourself and the universe of your dreams, dissatisfactions, hopes. Doing your artist date, you are receiving, opening yourself to insight, inspiration, and guidance."

So I have a previous episode that I talk about morning pages. So that is the sending aspect of being the radio transmitter. The artist date is putting yourself in receivership. And this is one place where so many of my clients are deficient and therefore depleted. They are all about working. They are all about showing up and giving and doing and contributing and creating. Usually, one of their greatest blocks is to receiving.

And whether it's receiving in the form of inspiration or love or help or support, a block to receiving is a block to receiving. So if you're not doing your artist date, then you're not receiving the creative energy that can come in from that. It also is likely showing up in other areas of your life.

So if you have a block to doing the artist date because you don't think that you have the time or that you deserve to do this for yourself or you think you don't have the resources, then you're also putting up blocks in other areas. It could be love. It could be money. It could be opportunities. So think about that.

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If you are resistant or doubtful that the artist date works or you don't think you can give that to yourself, know that's a block and then think, where else are their blocks in my life to me receiving what I want to receive, what would make me feel secure and solid, but also alive and flourishing and in love with life?

So, the artist date, a few specifics – I think of this as spending quality time with that inner creative aspect of you, that inner artist, your creative creature. And think about it in terms of how do you build a real and a solid relationship in any area of your life? We generally know what some of the foundational principles for that are; quality, time, listening, caring, loving attention, and fun, because we all bond through fun. Like, all those chemicals that are released from our pituitary gland and in our brain that help promote bonding like oxytocin is conducive and it's found when we're experiencing joy and love and feeling alive and connected. And that we all know when a mother is bonding with her infant that there is all this oxytocin released because it is the chemical of bonding.

So, how much oxytocin do you experience in relationship to yourself and your inner artist? That's what these artist dates can do and are about; spending playful loving time with yourself, developing a healthy, like robustly healthy loving intimate playful nurturing supportive relationship with this aspect of yourself, and also this aspect of yourself is there's an adult aspect and there's a very child-like aspect. So be careful not to go too cerebral and be like, well then, we are going to take our self to the museum because that's edifying and that's good for us.

If that trips your trigger and makes you come alive, then by all means, go for it. But if it just feels like something you should do rather than something that lights you up, that's not an artist date. So listen to that child self and listen to what it says is fun or would be playful.

Here is another bit of awesomeness from my friend and teacher Julia Cameron, "Your inner artist is telling you your art needs more playful inflow.

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A little fun can go a long way toward making your work feel more like play.” And here is an awesome line too, “We forget that the imagination at play is at the heart of all good work.” I love that line. And then she says, “In increasing our capacity for good creative work is what this book, *The Artist’s Way* is about.” And helping you increase your capacity for good creative work is so much what my work is about.

So let me say that on little line again, “We forget that the imagination at play is at the heart of all good work.” So what would that look like for you? And again, I want to emphasize, watch for the ways that your mind wants to get out of this, even when it’s doing it. So first, it wants to get out of it by saying, we don’t have enough time or we’ll kind of do double duty here and multitask and we’ll take our child to, you know, a make and take at the art museum, and that’s double duty. I’m being a good parent and it’s at a museum.

So, first rule, that artist date is just for you because if you were going on a date with somebody that you were really interested in and that you really wanted to create a long loving amazing even hot relationship with, would you have somebody tag along? No. So this is between you and this aspect of you. Try to make it at least two hours. And then watch out for the way your brain wants to do what it should do rather than what your heart, your inner child, your artist really wants to do.

So, watch out for the ways that it suggests, for instance, that you take your journal and laptop to the coffee shop to work there, and that will be like an artist date. And I’m kind of smiling because I know some of my clients are listening to this and that’s one way that their minds have wriggled out of it. And I’m only laughing too because that’s a way that my mind has wriggled out of it.

We can be so uncomfortable giving ourselves play until you start to do it and you see what big payoffs play can give, and that helps you calm down. But then after a while too, it’s not even about those payoffs, even though



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they're real and they're there and oftentimes very quantifiable, and I can attest to that. Like, play more, make more has absolutely been true in my case.

But the payoffs also, the grand one is, oh yeah, this is what it's like to be alive. This is what living is about. Here's a good little story that maybe will help you remember and be a good litmus test of whether something qualifies as an artist date for you or not.

So this last week, like I told you, we ended up staying in Iowa with my children in northern Iowa on my parent's farm. And there is a fossil pit up there, Devonian fossils in Rockford, Iowa. And my son really wanted to go. All my kids really wanted to go. So we took the kids, nieces, nephews, one afternoon my brother, husband, and I did, and they loved it. and my oldest son, Elijah, in particular really loved it.

The little kids were ready to go and he wasn't quite done after two hours. So the next afternoon, I took him back because he would have driven me crazy if I hadn't and I thought, this will be a fun thing for us to do together. And we were there for over three hours and I kid you not, at least every 10 minutes, if not every five, that kid was like, "Oh man, mom, I just love this, mom, mom, mom this is so much fun."

And of my children, he's usually the one that is a little bit more reserved and not so effusive, not ordinarily prone to just spontaneously being like, "Whoa mom, so fun, this is so great, this is so fun." And it just opened my heart and was also this a-ha for parenting of, like, oh my goodness, here I was thinking he's so reserved, but he's also probably an agreeable kid and I can look for more and more things that light him up in this way, because I think he has a lot of things he likes doing, but I want to help him find more and more of these things where he could not contain himself. He was digging around, finding fossils, going, "Oh my gosh, mom, you never know what you're going to find, look at this one, can we go over here?"

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And then one time, he said, “Mom, this is just the greatest, you and me together doing this thing that I love.” And again, it was a great insight for me as a parent to be like, okay, this is where his compass is pointing. And one time, he even identified it as, “I think I know why I love this so much. It’s a combination of two of my favorite things, hiking and digging for things.”

So for you, like, what would that be that would make you say, oh my gosh, I love this, I just love this so much, so that you couldn’t even contain yourself? When was the last time you felt that? And if it’s been a while, don’t beat yourself up. Just know that that’s available and that life can be more like that and that you, as an adult, can go out and search those things out. Because when he was asking to go to the fossil pit, I think he knew he wanted to go. I know he didn’t know just how much he would love being there and how much it would light him up and give him this glow that has lasted for days.

So what would that be for you? What would make you fall in love with the moment and make you fall in love with life and your life and fill you up so that you just couldn’t contain how much you were enjoying it? And again, be gentle with yourself, because if it’s been a while, you just need to follow the breadcrumbs to get back there. But if you don’t know that it’s possible, that’s why I’m telling you this story, because that’s what’s possible. It’s possible for you to feel that way and that artist dates can give you that kind of inflow, and you don’t have to set ridiculous standards for every artist date, that they all blow your mind, and blow your heart open, just like you wouldn’t do with every date, even with somebody that you loved dearly.

But again, start to follow those breadcrumbs and give yourself more of those experiences. And if you’re not sure where to start, start by trusting that you can’t get it wrong. Start by trusting that play also begins with curiosity and curiosity is a wonderful energy and emotion to fuel into your life. Maybe you’ve passed this antique store or vintage store for a while and you’ve been meaning to go in but you haven’t gone in. Maybe, even though

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you don't sew, maybe something about wandering down the aisles of a fabric store and all the color and pattern excites you. Just start to trust the little nudges, follow the breadcrumbs.

So, I also want to come back and address the part of your brain that will resist this and is dubious and still doesn't think it has the resources or thinks, maybe I have the resources but I don't think it works. So let me present your analytical mind, your logical mind, with some arguments about why this is really good for your life.

The artist date is like this meta-coaching process, this meta-transformational process because it's an infusion of energy and awareness that will help you break default patterns. It's going to heighten your awareness of where your default patterns are. So if you are feeling stuck anywhere in your life, changing things up by changing your routine and your environment and the conditions around you requires your brain to work in new ways, just like yoga is this practice where it's not just meant to be about the physical postures, but the point of the physical postures is that they put our bodies and our eyes and our minds in different positions so that we see that there are thousands of perspectives you could take in life.

The artist date does that too. It puts you in a different position and perspective. So instead of your brain just going towards its superhighway default pattern of, you know how life is, predictable, I know what is possible for me based on what's always been possible for me or others like me and I'm just going to head down that same old boring superhighway, even if it's not going where I want to go.

The artist date forces you to take the back roads, and once again. Puts you then in the land of opportunity and possibility and puts you in the way of the unexpected, of synchronicities, puts you in the way of magic and miracles, I would even argue. But I'll bring it back around to something that will be persuasive for your rational and analytical mind, is that it is a relatively inexpensive way to get unstuck and to have an infusion of creative energy

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that absolutely translates to your ability to have a more meaningful, powerful, fulfilling, productive, creative output.

When you're out on your artist date, you're in unfamiliar territory, so your mind is no longer doing that thing where it automatically is able to edit out all the information and just give you the steps for what to do next, because it's done it a thousand times. Now it doesn't know. So now that part of your brain that tends to shut down creative insights and fresh inspiration, now that side is occupied and is not in hyper-sensory mode. So it's not pre-editing all your ideas and suppressing all your fresh new insights and creative inspirations. Now those can flow in, and often do during these moments where we're engaged with play and wonder and awe and we're rediscovering the world again and we're rediscovering aspects of our self again.

So this brings me to the part of the program where I want you to do more than just listen. I want you to take all this information and make it transformational. So lean in and really work with me here, coach with me. So, you can probably guess what your assignment is for this week; an artist date. And for you overachievers, it's committing to an artist date for a period of time, writing yourself a contract and saying every week for two hours a week, I am committed to developing this amazing relationship with my creative side, with my inner artist, with this deep part of myself that wants to create a new and wants to rediscover just how creatively powerful and in love with life I can be.

I'm going to commit to giving myself that kind of loving caring nurturing attention. I'm going to tend to that relationship for at least two hours a week for six weeks, and then maybe you'll do it for 12, and then maybe you'll do it for a year because you'll have fallen so in love with yourself that you won't be able to stay away and you won't be able to give up that feeling of creative energy once you've experienced it flowing back through your veins, flowing through your heart and into your life.

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So, it's pretty simple, but not always easy to do. Two hours a week, follow the breadcrumbs, be easy on yourself if you don't find your fossil pit, sort of artist date to begin with, but trust that you're going to find it over time. Just keep doing something every week, trust that you can't get it wrong. Just be onto yourself for when you are shoulding all over this beautiful experience by listening too much to that hyper-responsible rational adult, and open yourself up more to the mystery and the wisdom of what that childlike aspect of yourself, to that powerful creative aspect of yourself. Like I said last week, that Blaise Pascal quote, "The heart has reasons which reason knows not."

So let this be two hours a week where you follow your heart and your intuition and trust that only good and beautiful things can come from that. I also have some ideas for you. You can take or leave them. Because I do love, like, going out into the world for artist dates, and then we also have the wonder of technology where the world can come to us. So I wouldn't rely on these exclusively, but I also do think it's a wonderful amazing option. And that is, like, all the classes and the people and experiences you can connect with through online classroom platforms and offerings.

And again, this still then meets the requirement of you're by yourself, so you're not having a third wheel along on your artist date. One super reasonable, it's incredibly cheap, beyond reasonable option if you want to start exploring your creativity more is the Creative Bug website. It's like \$5 a month and they have an endless array of classes.

You can try anything from calligraphy to succulent planting to painting to sewing. So you could peruse that and see what options are there. This is an artist named Alana Hennessey. I'll have all of these in the show notes too. She has just a wonderful energy and offers a variety of online art courses and she has a spiritual aspect to her. And even if you have never before had an art class or don't consider yourself to be a good drawer, good painter, and even if you consider yourself to be a good drawer or painter, I think you'll love the offerings she had. Flora Boyle teaches

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intuitive painting. She's awesome. Faith Evan Sills and Mati Rose have a book that's amazing.

I'm going to blank on the name of it right now, but I'll have that in the show notes. That website, that company called Masterclass, where they've curated all these amazing masters in many different genres, from Serena Williams for tennis, someone else that's a chef to James Patterson for writing thrillers to Annie Leibovitz for photography. You can take those courses online. That's an amazing option. Kelly Rae Robberts, and then if you are a visual artist and you want more of a rigorous classical approach, Sadie Valery has an amazing library of video teaching and Felicia Forte is an incredible artist who does individual painting lessons and you'll Skype with her or Zoom with her and she'll give you assignments.

If you are a writer or a poet or someone who loves mythology and wants to delve into deeper aspects of your writing via mystery, Fran Quinn, my poetry mentor has workshops around the country that he does one weekend a month in different cities, and he's also available for private sessions. And I don't have any affiliate program going on, so I'm not recommending these because I have some sort of financial incentive. My only incentive is I think these are wonderful programs and people offering ways for you to feed your inner artist and start building that amazing relationship with yourself that are really accessible and really affordable.

And whether you go with these or another option, please don't skip the artist date because I know that so much of moving into a more creatively powerful way of being and just a more joyful and naturally resilient powerful way of living is to move out of survival mode and into creative mode. And you can't be falling in love with yourself or your life and also maintain a vibration of anxiety and constant worry and obsession with thoughts of, like, maybe I'm not good enough.

So just try, maybe less of trying to make these thoughts go away or just tolerating them or fixing them, and instead, give artist dates a try. Give

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yourself the opportunity to play and fall in love with this aspect of yourself and reap the benefits of the beautiful energy that flows from that kind of healthy and joyful relationship.

Thank you again so much for listening to this podcast. If you enjoy the content of this podcast, I'd love it if you could leave a review. You can do that on iTunes or by going to my website at [www.leahcb.com](http://www.leahcb.com) and if you've been enjoying the podcast and want to take this work further then I would love to talk to you about *The Art School*.

Right now, I still have some discovery consults open and available if you want to talk to me in person to see if that's a good fit for you. July 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for the early bird registration for the fall session. We also will have, at the time that this episode goes live, two more summer workshops that you can participate in. If you enroll in the fall session, they're included, or you can just join a-la-carte, one workshop at a time, for \$247 a workshop.

And for those of you who haven't heard me talk about *The Art School* before, in a nutshell, what it is about is helping you to make your life work. And a lot of it centers around just what I've been talking about today; developing a very robust healthy thriving relationship with your creativity and with your true self. Because I know expanding your creativity will expand your life, whether you identify as an artist or whether you just know that there's some aspect of you, that there's more to you, and there's a part of you that wants to be nurtured and that you want to live from a more creative place instead of just following the track that's been laid out for you by others.

So much of my work, whether it's through *The Art School* or whether it's in coaching private clients is helping people move beyond fear and anxiety and tension and agitation, out of survival mode and into creative mode. And creative mode is this place where you are relaxed and at peace. It's not that life doesn't have problems, it's just you know you are okay and you can handle them.

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And this creative mode too is the most powerful place from which to create because you're not creating in order to prove anything or in order to escape some anxiety you have now, but instead to create from a place of, what am I capable of? What am I capable of that I haven't even touched upon yet, that I haven't even scratched the surface? And then the real question, am I capable of creating that, of being more, contributing more, but in a way that doesn't come at the expense of my life and things that I love but in a way that instead enhances it and uplifts it? Because that's a concern that I hear with people who are new to me or new to the work that I do is, but am I going to be able to commit to this?

And I tell them, for sure, this requires a commitment, but not in the way that you've maybe experienced it before because I want you to be committed to experiencing how powerful you can be while also feeling like a wholeness and a health and a love for yourself and a life that you never have before. So my coaching and my programs are not about draining you or requiring so much of you. They are about giving to you and nourishing you and supporting you so that you feel amplified and built up and edified and restored. I want you to feel more like yourself because of this experience.

So, if working with a coach has been on your radar or something has been nudging you that I might be the person you've been looking for, follow that breadcrumb, because right now, you have a free opportunity to do so. I do offer the discovery consults, a limited number of them, and again, you can schedule them just by emailing me, [leah@leahcb.com](mailto:leah@leahcb.com), with discovery consult in the subject line and I will send you the link for a session and any other information about private coaching or *The Art School* that you might be interested in.

So, to close the program today, I have a question, you may have heard me say this before, but it fits in really well with the theme of today's podcast. I want you to ask yourself, how good am I willing to let it get? Just keep that question at the back of your mind as you think about scheduling artist dates, as you think about giving yourself all that you need and that you



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want and that your soul really requires. How good are you willing to let it get?

I hope it's pretty dang amazing and beautiful, everybody. Thanks so much for listening. I love you, there's nothing you can do about it. Have a great week and I look forward to talking to you next time.