

Ep #41: Following Your Passion with Dr. Deganit Nuur Part 2



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” Abraham Lincoln. In today’s episode, I’m excited to welcome back Dr. Deganit Nuur. Dr. Nuur is a world-renowned spiritual teacher, clairvoyant, doctor of acupuncture, writer, and lecturer. Besides being named one of the top 15 intuitives globally by Gwyneth Paltrow’s Goop, Deganit has been featured in the New York Times, Vanity Fair, Vogue, Forbes, and countless other publications.

So, while you might think, why would I have an intuitive on to tell you about creating your future, don’t they just tell you what your future is, that couldn’t be further from the truth. I think at the heart and soul of Deganit’s gift and work is helping people to discover what their inner truth and wisdom is and how aligning themselves with that in mind, body, and spirit can help them be the most powerful creators that they have the potential 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.

Welcome back, you beautiful creative souls. Thank you so much for joining me for another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. And I really do want to emphasize how grateful I am for you to be listening. There is a lot of wonderful things going on in my world right now. For instance, *the Art School* starts next week, and even more than that, the people in it are who I am so grateful for. And some of them include those of you who have been listeners who I didn’t know a year ago at this time, who you didn’t know of me until you started listening to this podcast.

So thank you so much to those of you who are literally joining *The Art School* community this fall, and also to those of you who are in the

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community, even though you're not in the coaching program. You all are very important to me and I love hearing from you, so keep writing in.

Also, I'm going to keep my intro short and sweet today because I want to make sure to take you to the great content, Deganit's interview conversation. I loved the entire conversation and you, for sure, do not want to miss the magic that happens in this second half. And then, after that, I have another really exciting bonus with you today. I have another conversation with another creative powerhouse amazing woman.

Her name is Kirsten Marion. She is the CEO of Common Deer Publishing, which is a children's publishing company. And I am so honored and privileged to call her a beloved friend and a client. And she has some very exciting news that I know many of you – you're going to love what she has to say and you're going to love this opportunity that she's speaking about specifically today. And she also has so much more, I know, to offer this community, so I've asked her to come back for a more in-depth interview at a later time because she really is a remarkable woman and a remarkable creator and champion of creators.

So we'll get to Kirsten's talk after Deganit's talk and then, after both of those, please stick around because I have closing coach with me and inspiration for you today. So enjoy the podcast.

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Leah: So, what is part of your wellbeing regiment in mind, body, and spirit. Oh hello, a puppy...

Deganit: Yes, he gets a little jealous when I'm on the phone, so now I'll hold him so he doesn't bark. So, my wellbeing regiment, I love mornings to

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myself, so I love not waking up to an alarm. And I have this luxury, right. I know I set my own schedule, so I can do this, but I don't wake up to an alarm. I wake up and I cuddle with the dog for anywhere between a half hour and an hour, like, just in bed staring at him. It's very important for me. Then I'm either playing music I love that's really either happy and inspiring or really soothing. I journal every morning, I meditate, and I get some movement in there, so some sort of exercise.

Those three, for me, are my trifecta; the meditation to address the spiritual component, the journaling for my mind. And I just feel that journaling for me is like an internal shower cleansing, just getting it out of my brain. And then exercise always does me right with the endorphins. Time permitted, I'll take Bentley to the dog park. I love the dog park. And then from there, because I'm so good and I'm so solid, that's when I start the workday with a full tank of gas. You know, like, then I'm full, I'm excited, and again I'm kind of bored. Like, I want all the good to spill over into the rest of my life. Containing all that good to yourself is boring. But then I get to share it with all my loved ones.

Leah: That's awesome. So I love that that setup – because I talk with creatives and artists about, you know, what are your wellness routines or how do you take extraordinary care of yourself so that you're not just sustaining yourself on a quarter of a tank but it just spills over. And then, so has it evolved your process with sessions? When you are with a client for an intuitive reading, do you have a certain ritual there or do you speak from a different space or do you have to transition?

Deganit: The intuitive space is my favorite space. I really wish I was that person, even when my eyes are open, it's so great. So I do have universe readings. So you know that there's always that initial intention setting, for me, speaking those words – so for most creatives, for most people on the path, what I've noticed is rituals really help. And so if you're always sitting

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in the same place, if you always start at the same hour, if you always bring the same exact incense, whatever those sensory associations are, if you do them over and over again, it does create this portal to that sacred space and you have those expectations of that sacred space that you created for yourself in this practice, in this virtual. And so the second I say the intention, I'm there and I'm connected with the client and it's like I can't even feel my body.

So if my shoulders were hurting two seconds ago, all of a sudden, I don't have shape and form, I don't have a body. It's very peaceful. It's so peaceful. I love it so much. And yeah, that's all it takes for me is that intention setting.

Now, before it used to be – so now, I meditate every morning, and on a good day I'll meditate every night too, but that's not always. But it used to be before starting the workday I had a specific meditation protocol that I'd go through, an opening meditation to prepare for the sessions and I'd ground all of the sessions. And it got very intricate and detailed. I probably stopped doing that maybe five or six years ago. Now that feels more like it is me and it doesn't have to be a practice, I guess.

Leah: Was that something you were taught? I mean, you mentioned, like the community. How did you even discover that you had this ability?

Deganit: Well, I also resisted discovering that. I just knew that I was really emotional and – so in high school, my mood would change per class. So every 50 minutes, you're in a different setting, and depending, and depending on that setting and who I was surrounded by, I was either mad or sad or happy or feeling confident or feeling super shy. And I just thought I was nuts. I did not enjoy being myself. It was very uncomfortable.

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And then I went to college and college was super competitive and even more self-doubt and more conflicting feelings because the class sizes expanded from 30 to like 1000, and so not realizing at the time I was picking up on 1000 individual's feelings, you know. So I started meditating when I was 17 and the meditation helped for sure, but the second I'd open my eyes, it wasn't as helpful. So it helped in meditation and I'd gain access to peace and trust and serenity then, but then I'd go to class and again it was all back.

And so I got really lucky because I found a teacher that taught me about intuitive development stuff. He was a shift manager. I was waitressing and he was my manager while waitressing...

Leah: Wow, that's divine intervention...

Deganit: It's nuts.

Leah: Cosmic rendezvous.

Deganit: Right, it's insane. And so yeah, he was like, you're not crazy, you're just highly intuitive and because I was like, I think I need to be medicated. I really thought I don't know that I'm cut out for this life, I don't think I have what it takes. I can't listen to a story without crying, I can't – this is really debilitating, like it felt really debilitating to have more inside me than I understood, like more feelings than I even could make sense of.

And so after developing my intuition and using that same grounding board of letting go of all that background noise, I made friends with myself and realized none of those thoughts were mine, none of those feelings were mine, and then I was better able to understand what is mine. And that's

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when I started reading friends, just for fun, and then it developed into its own thing.

Leah: That is an incredible story.

Deganit: Thanks, and I've noticed that most artists, when they're painting, they're channeling, right? I mean, I don't paint – well I do, but for fun. But yeah, it seems like that's your form of meditation, right, and your true self coming through.

Leah: I can very much relate to what you are saying about – I would call it like a ship in the storm. But I could really hold myself together so nobody would know that, but I felt very much like a ship in the storm. And also, I really love people so I don't want to be a complete hermit, but also feeling just like you said, I do not enjoy being me. And then feeling like I don't have the skills to cope with all of this and looking at other people, like, is everyone else feeling this way? It's taken me a lot of energy to present this I'm together and I'm okay, and I think it was in the forays that I had, the times where I would tow my weight into creativity and I would feel at peace and I would feel this sense of at home in the universe. So it was those forays into art or writing.

And also, like, movement was meditation, so sports and riding my bike for hours. Then I would find a place where I would feel at peace and I'd be like, this feels amazing. This feels like me but like you said, then I'd go back into the regular world and feel like I am not cut out for this world. And I think it was just over time coming to an understating that who I really was was who I was in those creative moments that was, like, tapping into myself. And also, it was actually on my bike and training for hours that I started to feel my paintings first.

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I'd always wanted to be an artist, but it was always those long –because they were meditative and the other voices were quiet – where I felt them physically wanting to get out. And it was more and more then questioning the thoughts that said, oh that's not you, that's just a random, you can't get that back.

And then I started to read – it was around the time when Mihaly Csikszentmihaly, the flow psychologist came out. And I thought, what if it's not just a flow state? What if that's really what's available to humans more of the time that we're really supposed to feel more of this peace and more of this sense of connection to ourselves and what if we can evolve ourselves that way? And so for sure, painting, being in that mode feels amazing and appealing in and of itself.

Deganit: Truly, and it's that repetitive motion. So if you think about shamanic drumming, it's always the same beat repetitively because they say it transcends, or Hail Marys, Mala beads, the way we pray and bow. It's that repetitive motion. It does something really chemical and it gets you out of your head and it gets you out of thinking consciousness and ego and dips you into spirit. And it sounds like that's what happened for you on that bike ride is just that repetitive motion, and then before you know it – it's kind of how I feel with the readings, like my body doesn't even exist anymore and I'm just one with the universe. And it's talking to me and I'm listening to it, and this is the painting that it's commissioning me to paint for it, you know.

Leah: Yeah, and I think, to your point of how it doesn't take you as long to get into that space now, you don't need the intricate – because having been there many times, having gone there many times, it's like a portal and it's passed through and your being knows more where that portal is, it can find its way in the dark, and then the more you can get to that – it's like a different state. And I sometimes feel like, if I can remember that, I can't

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think my way there, but I can feel my way there. Thinking is like, no. If I feel I'm forcing, I'm like, oh I can't get there. And it's not that there's a great intelligence to it...

Deganit: Huge.

Leah: It's not the way I had been conditioned to think of intelligence throughout my formal education, but I feel like it is. The access point does require that integration. There's a mental component, yes, but more of a mental getting out of the way, and definitely a physical emotional space to be in that facilitates it.

Deganit: Absolutely, and I agree, the more you do go there, that's how you create that, but then the more real it gets. Like, the first time it's novel and it's exciting, but are you ever going to go there again? You don't know. You don't know that you can trust it. You don't know that you can depend on it. you don't know how reliable this relationship is. The more you go there, the more it does feel like a geographical location. It's so real and tangible, even if it's ethereal, you know. It's so incredible.

So, what I find with my clients that are artists and highly creative is that they will trust it in that aspect of their life, you know, to act, to perform, to write, to draw, but then, let's come over and talk about having a career, supporting ourselves – like, nope, I don't do intuition there, I don't do creativity. They trust it so much, and maybe sometimes it's second nature by then too, in one area of their life to be so brilliant. But there's a distrust to rely on that in other areas. Do you have any advice for people who are – like they're so brilliant in one area, but then they're like, no I will never be good at money, I will never be good at relationships.

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Deganit: So, a few things – how you do anything is how you do everything. So I think going back to conditioning, I do think that we each do have our strengths and then we have our weaknesses, obviously naturally. And I think what you focus on grows, and so why not focus on your strengths. Like, if you're having such a great time bike riding, why not bike ride more? And then if you're building that muscle in bike riding – so going back to the portal, you can access that state of consciousness once you've developed it, even when you're not bike riding.

And so you can let it trickle into that date. And if it's a first date and you're nervous, like, imagine yourself on that bike and have that version of yourself go on this first date, whether it's negotiating buying this house, you know, and you're nervous or you don't know the numbers, whatever, why not access that part of yourself that is tuned into the divine intelligence and that totally has your back to access this thing.

So at first, it might be a little bit of a visualization, a little bit of consciously accessing that portal that you've already created, and it might be like building that muscle. At first, it might be a training and it might be hard and you might, you know, feel the bike ride while you're with your real estate broker and then he says a word that you've never heard and suddenly the bike ride goes away. Then you have to consciously get back to the bike ride to continue the conversation and then you'll fall off the bike, get back on it, fall off, get back on it until it becomes a little bit more consistent and you're falling off it less frequently. And when you do fall off of it, you're getting right back on it that much faster and faster, so it's almost like the gaps get smaller and smaller and you're more consistently on it. Does that make sense?

Leah: Yes.

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Deganit: And then also, I think – and then going back to interdependence and community, if something's not in your wheelhouse, who cares? It's somebody else's wheelhouse; outsource it. It's great.

Leah: Right, like one time, I was thinking, well I'm not organized enough to run a group program. And then one of my colleagues said, what if you are organized enough and then outsource other – and actually, I'm like, I'm organized enough. I don't have to be a type A accountant, but I'm organized – I can lean into my strength...

Deganit: Yeah, we all need each other in this. And then you get to focus on what makes you feel good instead of berating yourself for that one thing that is just not your thing. Who cares? You've got all these other things.

Leah: I'm assuming you have a fair amount of creatives, artists for your healing services, your intuitive settings. So are there common themes and then...

Deganit: I think they're pretty universal themes that, yeah, the up-leveling, the shining bright. So okay, even if their art becomes their profession, that's awesome, and then sometimes, if they haven't done the inner work, then they might feel like a victim to their success. And so I just got lucky that this person discovered me, but now, oh my god, what if I'm sick, what if this happens, like, they'll have a hard time self-advocating. Or with the more successful ones that are – I don't want to call them victims to success, but that haven't done the inner work, they'll typecast themselves.

So we're constantly growing and evolving and changing and so maybe their modality has changed. Like, if they've always done modern dance and now they're getting into ballet, oh but can I make it in ballet? You know, they know me as a modern dancer. Or I have this great position – now I'm

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thinking of a specific client that I just spoke with last night who is a Broadway performer and is, like, I don't know that I want to do it, this doesn't bring me as much joy, but then am I going to devalue myself or discredit myself if I start teaching at one of these schools instead of performing in this way. And it's so – yeah, I forget what the question was, sorry again.

Leah: I just wanted to hear what some of the common themes from creatives were, and you already, not surprisingly intuited my second question in your answer, which was are there similarities between people who are just beginning and people who are successful?

Deganit: I think up-leveling and outgrowing your past self is the common theme. I think that's always the challenge. So whether you're outgrowing your corporate self and branching into the art world and saying I'm going to dedicate myself to art, or whether you're already established in the art world and saying I want to change my modality or change my presentation, or whatever, I think growth implies change and I feel like change is definitely usually a trigger for most.

Leah: Yeah, so up-leveling, outgrowing, that's definitely a theme when I coach clients too. And then a theme that comes up a lot that I think is related to those two – and I wonder if you hear this – it's kind of feeling you need a bigger energetic base, like the capacity expansion question. Like, I think there's some resistance to owning that you could create even more or you could live into your vision without it coming at such a great expense that we hold back because we're like, how could I become that? I don't have the energy, I don't have the resources, I would have to sacrifice so much.

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Deganit: I think, like, no pain no gain is such an outdated model, but I think most people feel like in order to get to where they want to go, it's a lot of blood, sweat, tears, suffering, you know, all of that. Whereas usually, if it's in alignment, it feels really great in that flow state and it's really easy and I think we have a hard time trusting the ease. Like it's that whole too good to be true thing. Really, the more you grow, I think, the easier it gets. And I'm seeing this – so I also have clients that are celebrities and they have entire staffs and teams, like, feeding them, you know.

Just basic human needs, they're preorchestrated for them which is so beautiful, so that they can grow and up-level. It just gets easier. The more you are casting your light, the more the universe wants to support more of your light and it just – it truly can get easier, but I think we're not able to believe that that's so. So it's such a mind-fuck when it does get easier and you're like, no, no, no this can't be right, or oh I'm going to lose it all tomorrow or, you know. I think, the more self-actualized you are, the easier and easier it actually gets.

Leah: I love that. And then there is – we have that reaction, who am I, like, this thing that comes to easily to me...

Deganit: It's your calling...

Leah: Yes, exactly. And I find women in particular resist that. This is easy for me. Like, how can I ask to be paid for this or how can I trust that this is good because I did this so easily.

Deganit: Right, and do you know a little bit about the divine feminine and the divine masculine?

Leah: Yes.

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Deganit: So I think we live in a predominantly masculine culture where it's like hustle and grind and you go out and you get it, right? And that is beautiful. When it's healthy, it is beautiful to self-advocate and to go after your dreams and stuff like that, that inspiration flow running through you. But that's a very masculine way of actualizing. And the more divine feminine way of actualizing is calling things in and being more still and meditative and introspective. And the more you reorchestrate your inner microcosm, your outside world starts to shift and change in support of that.

So if you're in female form, I think we're so lucky and I think we're predisposed to have it a little bit easier because we have a little bit more of that divine feminine consciousness. Men have it too, but if we're in female form, chances are we have at least a little bit more than the average male counterpart. And so we can channel a little bit more easily and call things in with greater ease, but this culture doesn't glorify that as much as they glorify burning the candle at both ends and being a workaholic and, you know, getting it in that way. But for us, we're actually wired to enjoy and have a lot of pleasure and joy and to align with purpose and for things to start working out for us in support of us, does that make sense?

Leah: Absolutely, and that was one of the things that I know I resisted for a while. It was like almost a fear of letting go to the old paradigm of, like, this is how you are a responsible human being and this is how you achieve things. If I wasn't over-efforting, it didn't feel right until it was those moments where I felt in flow and connected and like I could go – just I didn't know where it was coming from. For instance, that painting – and I'll have to post this online now too since it's not video, but I got the inspiration for that on a bike ride, and it's called She Rising, and it is all about divine feminine.

Deganit: Oh my gosh, I have chills. Wow, I love that.

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Leah: That came to me. I was on a long 60-mile bike ride on an Iowa highway by myself, about this time of year actually, August, and just in that state and I was just kind of starting my artist journey. And I heard, like, this big voice over my left shoulder say, “She.” And it was so exhilarating and terrifying and there was like no one around. And I just took off. That was the fastest bike ride I’ve ever done, but it felt like just hearing that was very much a part of the shift in that journey, that, “She.” And I think it has meant many things, but for me, sort of announced that there’s a different way and it is this way of relaxing into who you are and relaxing into that divine feminine presence.

And it was also a very powerful voice. It was not timid, passive, weak, weaker. There was no doubt that it was such a powerful voice and I think that’s also why it terrified me. I love that. Well, I don’t want to take up too much more of your time. The last question that I had, before I ask you how people can find you and work with you is, so if someone’s out there listening and they’re in that space, either where they’re still feeling like they’re faking it until they make it or they haven’t closed that gap to begin with between where they are in this vision, the sacred dream they have of what they could create and contribute in life, what would you say to them?

Deganit: A few things – so I love the idea of a vision board. I’ve also studied feng shui and it works on a similar element where if you’re seeing the thing constantly, then it starts to infiltrate your subconscious mind. And so that starts to become – your subconscious mind, let me back that up, is oftentimes more powerful than your conscious mind. So if you’re creating that smart goal to close the gap and you’re like, but if I sell this many paintings by the end of the year then I have become that type of an artist, then I’m worthy, then I get to have the gallery showings and whatever your mind might be or whatever that gap is, if your human is going through the motions, that’s wonderful, and that’s that divine masculine that’s absolutely necessary.

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I think merging the divine masculine with the divine feminine would be both that hustle and then that flow and retraining your subconscious mind to feel worthy of it. And so vision boards can help with that, having images of people who have been there and done that before you, all the greats that came before you can help just remind you.

So that's how I manifested my move to New York. I created a vision board to visit New York. I didn't think I'd ever move to New York. But I just wanted to visit New York. It was a lifelong dream. And so I created a vision board and I passed by – it was in my kitchen, so every time I cooked, every time I got a glass of water, it was just always there. And I didn't stare at it. Like, I didn't meditate at it like it was my alter or anything like that. It was in the background.

But I do think that it did something. I mean, buying the plane ticket also did something. But I do think it just got New York to be comfortable and familiar and not this big city that is so far away from me that I can't even conceive of being at. And then, when I did set foot here, again, it felt comfortable. I recognized the buildings. It was familiar. It wasn't so foreign that I didn't feel worthy of it, you know.

And that was – I didn't realize at the time that I was materializing living here. I totally thought it was going to be a visit, but within two days here I was like, oh no, this is it, this is my home. So I also don't realize how big these dreams can be and what they can do for you, but I feel like surrounding yourself with imagery or subconscious programming that helps your nervous system adjust and helps you think in that way and behave and see yourself in that light, so at least invisibly the gap is already closed and so when physically the gap is closed, it's like, oh right I knew I'd be here, and I'm worthy of it, of course I'm here, I put in the time, I made this happen, I'm not a victim to this, this didn't happen to me, it happened for me and through me, you know.

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Leah: Yes, it's like your next natural step.

Deganit: Yeah, totally natural and organic. It's not some crazy big thing that's out there.

Leah: Yes, well, and what you said about feeling worthy in there too I love too, because I know that's so much a part of your work as well is the healing of the individual so they can expand their light and love their own light, and that also, they are the universe, working on the individual level too also heals on the universal level.

Deganit: Absolutely, we're each so impactful. I don't think we give ourselves credit. Our lives have a ripple effect on so many other lives, you know.

Leah: Yes, if you have dreams and visions of contributing to the world and healing the world and helping others, it doesn't take away from that by giving to yourself and caring for yourself and knowing you're worthy.

Deganit: If you feel worthy, then you're also feeling worthy of championing others. But if you're feeling unworthy, then it's almost like you're apologetically championing others or you're doing it out of need and desperation, not out of hope and desire and to uplift the collectives but because the collective is so fucked it needs – it's such a different approach. And so if you're energetically out of alignment, like if you're feeling like, oh my god the world needs to change and I'm the only one to do it and you're nervous and depressed about it, then you're actually infusing the cause that you're so passionate about with depression and hopelessness, thinking this isn't actually going to work but I have to put in my time.

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Whereas if you're coming from being high on your own supply and in that abundance consciousness and I'm good I transform my own life, maybe I can at least help one other person or whatever it might be. Like, change is possible, I've seen it from within. So you're infusing whatever cause you're passionate about with hope, with optimism, with inspiration, and it's so different. Those same actions under that thought paradigm I find to be 10 times more effective than those same exact actions coming from a more limited thought paradigm, you know.

Leah: Yes, that's so good. And I think that, especially for the population listening to this, as we said earlier, creatives are often empaths, artists are often empaths and you're very sensitive to know that you'll be so much more powerful when your foundation is strong and you are full and you're filled up and you're just radiant, full of light, yes.

Deganit: Absolutely, and also there's science too. So the more you do heal yourself, oftentimes you become less selfless and more altruistic and want to become greater change. And so it just happens naturally. You don't have to force yourself into being a good person. You don't have to bully yourself into being altruistic. Like, work on yourself first and you'll naturally, once you're feeling that great, you'll naturally feel inclined to share some of that greatness. You don't have to – you know what I'm saying, like, going back to the divine feminine, it can be a little bit easier.

Leah: Yeah, it can. And a question I love, because it usually challenges me whenever I'm up-leveling, is how good am I willing to let it get?

Deganit: I love that, oh my gosh, I love that.

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Leah: Because that just opens my mind to so many possibilities and it also then immediately shows me places where my mind wants to shut that down.

Deganit: I'm writing that on all my mirrors tonight, yes, I love that, thank you.

Leah: Thank you, thank you so much for today. Throughout this conversation – I'm going to go back and take notes because you would say just a word or a phrase here and there that I think is worthy of thinking about for a week or a couple of weeks, so thank you for all of those gems. And I can also attest that a session with you is absolutely amazing and part of my taking extraordinary care of myself and caring for my creativity and my ability to coach. So, how can people find more of you and you have a podcast coming out soon, which I'm so excited for.

Deganit: I do, we're hoping to launch in October, yeah. So the podcast, I'll be teaching people how to tap into their own intuition, doing prerecorded readings. I'm super excited about it. Still working on the name. It's probably going to be Manifest Nuurvana or Nuurvana something. My last name is Nuur, so the website is Nuurvana. And if you're on Instagram, the handle is @Nuurvana. And then both the website and the Instagram have links to how to book a session. Or if you're interested in Nu It School to cultivate your own intuition, it's an online membership program. So there's 15 modules that help you heal yourself and develop your intuition. And every Monday, we have a phone call with myself where I'm guiding you into meditation and then reading your classmates.

Leah: That is so fun.

Deganit: It's so much fun. Yeah.

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Leah: Wonderful, well thank you, Deganit, you're such a light.

Deganit: I feel just the same about you. And thank you so much for your words of affirmation and also you come into the sessions knowing that all of the power is within you and I think that's why our sessions work as well, because I don't think you're giving your power away to me. I feel like you're using me as I want to be used, as a conduit and reminding yourself of who you really are and what you really want. So thank you for doing the work and for showing up perfectly full and complete to our sessions.

Leah: Thank you for that. I feel like, to me – and this is what I love for coaching to be is like a creative collaboration. I do believe so much in the power of witness and community and so it's awesome to play with you on that plane.

Deganit: I love it. It's my favorite.

Leah: Well have a great rest of your day.

Deganit: You too, thank you.

Leah: So I'm going to have to post pictures of your adorable puppy baby. For everyone that's listening, that's like if there were giggle breaks, that's because – is it Bentley?

Deganit: Yeah, Bentley, like the car.

Leah: So sweet. He's posing too, awesome. Well you and Bentley have a nice walk this afternoon, enjoy New York City.

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Deganit: Thank you so much, and enjoy your kids and your love life and your art and vibrating in all good things.

Leah: Thank you. Take care.

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So I hope you enjoyed that conversation with Dr. Deganit Nuur. She really is extraordinary and you can find out more about her and her amazing energy and work and magic at the links on my show notes page, and also by going to her website, www.nuurvana.com. You could find all about her and her work there as well as all the links to where she is on the socials and I'm also so excited, she's launching her own podcast sometime this fall and that is going to be phenomenal. I will be tuning in for sure.

So now, I want to take you to the second special interview for you today, my talk with Kirsten Marion, CEO of Common Deer Publishing.

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Leah: So, I am going to do a little introduction from your website just to give people an overview of what Common Deer Press is all about. So Common Deer Press is on a mission to find and publish extraordinary and enduring books for children and teens, books that change lives, books that build bridges, connect cultures, transcend differences, and by showing humanity and others open hearts. We believe that when you captivate a child with books, worlds of possibilities open up to them. Getting the goosebumps again. Books widen the aperture of what a child's life can become. Through our publishing endeavors, we strive to be excellent partners to our authors, distributors, and suppliers, helpful guides to parents, educators, and

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librarians, and caring allies to the literary community. So, welcome, Kirsten Marion, CEO so Common Deer Press. Thank you for being here.

Kirsten: Thank you for having me. This is very exciting for us.

Leah: Yes, and as we were just saying, this topic makes us emotional because it's at the cross section of so many things we both care about so much; children, education, the arts, and also the vast possibilities for moving the world forward and healing the world, changing the world through education, through books, and through the arts and through opportunities for artists and entrepreneurs.

So today, you're with us to talk about a very special opportunity where others – and I know there are others listening to this podcast who are kindred spirits and have the same heart for this work knowing that artists and visionaries and leaders can move the world forward through these mediums, you have a very special opportunity for people to participate in this movement.

Kirsten: It's a two-pronged opportunity. The first is that a year ago, we launched a writing competition to find extraordinary and enduring children's books because of all the things you just said. So that's an opportunity, a level playing field, for anybody to submit a manuscript, whether they're a young author, a debut, or emerging writer, it doesn't matter because in this competition, the judging is anonymous. It's a level playing field. Nobody knows if you have a publishing history. None of the judges know your publishing history or an agent or a platform, all these things that young authors or debut authors are told they have to have before they can submit, which inhibits a lot of people from finding their stories, for writing what they believe is important. So that's the first opportunity we've given people.

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And we want to make this competition sustainable and international. Last year it was just Canada-wide, and we want to encourage more new voices and greater possibilities for children and for authors. So we want to make it international. This is expensive and in publishing, it's an interesting economic model because virtually all the costs of publishing a book are upfront. So from acquisition to getting your first dime back from sales, you've spent all the money. So it's expensive. You need capital upfront for this. So using our creativity, we decided to crowdfund for this. And so we have set up a campaign on Kickstarter showcasing the, wait for it, 14-year-old winner of the 2019 Uncommon Quest – that's the name of our writing competition...

Leah: That's amazing.

Kirsten: Yeah, I mean, this young woman has written an absolutely dazzling sci-fi time travel for young adults. And honestly, when we went to connect the dots after the judging was done, I just about fell off my chair when I read her query letter because I had no idea, nobody had any idea.

Leah: Really? That's just incredible. I got the chills when you first told me about this, but every time it hits me again. That is incredible on so many levels.

Kirsten: Well, it is and to show the value in supporting these young and debut authors, to be honest, initially I was a little uncertain about signing a 14-year-old. It's a lot of pressure on a young person, just to even go through the editing process, let alone the publicity and the promotion process. But this young woman has just been a trooper. In fact, all three of the winners for 2019 were debut or debut fiction writers, even though published authors had submitted as well. Once it rose to the top, they'd never had a fiction book published before.

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Leah: Wow, so I'm going to take a little aside and do the coaching part of this. So anyone listening who's like, well I've never published before...

Kirsten: So what?

Leah: Right, so what?

Kirsten: Write your story. The world needs your story. Humans are narrative driven. We need stories. We need good stories. We need stories that showcase what's possible, what's positive, what's connecting.

Leah: Yes, I think – and I have this line in my studio here – that people don't need more information; they need more stories to have faith in.

Kirsten: Yes, and it can be done in a very entertaining light-hearted way. I mean, for kid's literature in particular, I don't want to be preachy or earnest or pedantic about it, you know. These books need to spark a sense of adventure, a sense of creativity, imagination, but open new ideas at the same time.

Leah: Yes, and along those lines too, I know that you have – I mean, what you're doing, and you and I have talked about this before, is part of something we sense is so much bigger, is like a movement of, like, how can we better support children and open hearts and minds and nourish and cultivate them in their creativity because they are the future. And then there are also those of us who maybe our inner artist wasn't cultivated or nourished as a child. Maybe our voices weren't honored or we didn't have the opportunity to cultivate them in a certain way. So I know you have a three-word anthem...

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Kirsten: Find your story. Find your story, whether that's the story you want to read, whether that's the story you want to write, whether that's the story that you really believe about yourself. And that's the other thing about children's books is they can help a child explore different identities and A, not feel alone in the world when they see other people like them in books or in similar situations. Because children, unfortunately in some places, do go through difficult times and it's easy to feel very lost and alone during that period – not to get too weighed down here and I kind of lost the plot of what I was saying.

Leah: Well, the find your story too, children get lost, and finding your story is how to find their storyline, but also the story they have within them worth telling. And I think it speaks to the age that we're all in, all of us adults too who, if you look around in the world, sometimes you could also feel lost and alone and overwhelmed and you could – some would say that, as a society, we are lost and overwhelmed. And I think though, the solution to that is always going to be action towards something constructive and creative, but then it is also to find meaning and to – and I think, to me, that's part of what find your story is about because if the things that happen to us just seem like, oh my gosh it's just one bad thing after another, you turn on the news.

But I think you said, you know, as human beings, we're narrative driven, so part of that to me is because we are meaning, seeking souls and beings and we want to glean the wisdom from our lives. We want to see how we are developing or evolving or how others are. And we love stories of emotional transformation and the triumph of the human spirit. So I so love that that is the anthem of Common Deer, this find your story, and I think it's perfect – like, the opportunity with this Kickstarter campaign is, hey, if you were feeling, like, in the world right now, there's so many bad things going on, don't just stay with that. Look for that constructive creative thing that you can do. You can be a part of a movement that creates change and also

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a movement that, because it is supporting children and it is in support of artists and people who are moving the world forward, that the ripple effects are exponential.

Kirsten: Absolutely, and the campaign is supportive in a number of ways. First, the money raised will be used to further this program and find more great children's books. But also we have committed to donating hundreds of books to children's literacy programs, libraries, and schools.

Leah: Oh, that's awesome.

Kirsten: So, I mean, I believe that every child should be able to read a book, no matter what their personal or economic circumstances are, they should be able to find a book that they love and that they can connect with.

Leah: I love that, and you guys are making that possible. And anyone listening can also be a part of this to make this possible.

Kirsten: Absolutely, and the award is a beautiful, beautiful exclusive edition of the winning book of the 2019 Quest written by this young woman. She she's so talented that she designed the exclusive edition cover.

Leah: Wow, and you also on this – so I'm going to include all of the information for how to find the Kickstarter campaign because you have the site set up, the page set up...

Kirsten: The preview link is ready. People can certainly go to that and take a look at all the material on it. There's some downloads, there's a video, and they can click to be notified when the campaign starts. The full Campaign starts September 3rd and runs to September 30th. And if people have any questions, they can ask us. But I strongly encourage anyone

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who's interested to hop on early because some of the best deals are in limited quantities; just saying.

Leah: Yeah, for people who aren't familiar with how Kickstarter works, can you say a little bit about how that does work, those opportunities that are in limited quantities?

Kirsten: Okay, so there's two opportunities in limited quantities. The first is to pledge for the book, the special edition book, and you get the ebook as well. And there's 200 copies available at \$25 and then it waterfalls to the final price of \$35 for that pledge level. Another one that people might be interested in is an opportunity to be publically acknowledged for their support, and there are limited opportunities to have your name and the name of somebody close to you or that you want listen in the winning book as one of the Angels of the Quest.

Leah: I love that; Angels of the Quest, champion of children's literature and changing the world. What an incredible opportunity. So I've already asked you to come back at a later time because you have so much more to share about publishing, because I know I have a lot of listeners who are authors or are aspiring authors and also...

Kirsten: Or book illustrators...

Leah: Yes, I do actually have book illustrators and also in *Art School* too this next session. So for sure, I want to have you back on and share everything you're willing to share on that topic. And also, you have such an amazing life story and there's such an example of creative living and not taking no for an answer and reinvention. And you are such a force of nature, so I want to have you back on so I can pull those gems from you because so many times I hear from listeners and things that they're asking

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me, I think of you and other clients that I've had in particular that I'm like, I want to really highlight and spotlight what you have to share.

Kirsten: And you mentioned *The Art School* and this campaign, this movement would not have happened without *The Art School* and your coaching. And for people who have not had the opportunity to take *the Art School*, there is one podcast that has been a game-changer for me in approaching my publishing company and the campaign, and that's your podcast on dream modeling. I'm sorry, I don't remember the number of the episode, but I highly recommend that episode to anybody.

Leah: Oh, thank you, that means so much to me. It's quite the irony that it's that podcast because I use that process myself to create what I've created, which includes a coaching practice where my dream was coaching world class creative powerhouses who are visionaries with big hearts who want to make the world a better place. And look who I get to work with; Kirsten Marion of Common Deer Press.

Kirsten: The process works; use it.

Leah: Yeah, well thank you so much for being on today and I'm going to include all the ways people can find out about how to be a part of this movement and find out more about Common Deer Press and we are going to have you back on to talk at length.

Kirsten: Thank you, bye-bye now.

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Thank you for listening to my talk with Kirsten Marion and hearing about Common Deer's amazing Kickstarter campaign and really, I believe the

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

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movement that they are initiating to not only be champions of children's literature, that is enough, but also being connected to this greater vision that it is through the arts that we can heal the world, and especially when we give attention, thoughtful attention, and we make it our commitment to open the minds and hearts of children and to make sure that all children have this kind of access, and not just any access, but amazing high-quality extraordinary children's literature. So I hope you will consider joining in with the campaign and joining the movement and really making a difference.

So this brings me to the end of the podcast today. I am going to fuse coach with me with the closing inspiration. And you heard a little bit of it before when I was talking to Deganit at the end of our conversation, but I want to pose the same question to you as I shared with her. And that is, how good are you willing to let it get?

Maybe you want to post that on an index card or Post-It note all over the house. Maybe you want to think of that first thing in the morning when you open your eyes, or last thing at night as you're going to sleep, but to give your incredible powerful brain and imagination that constructive and creative prompt, open yourself up just a little bit more every day. How good am I willing to let it get?

So good, I hope is your answer; so, so good. I would love to be a part of helping you get there. Let me know if there's any way in which I can support you. I would love to do that. Thanks for listening in, everyone. Have a beautiful week. I love you guys, I'll talk to you next time.