

Ep #59: My Holiday Gift to You



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With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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“A miracle is a shift in perception from love to fear,” a Course in Miracles. In today’s episode, I have a small gift for you, but a small gift that I know can yield enormous shifts.

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, everyone. Wherever you are and whatever you’re celebrating, I know that we could all use more time dwelling in the energy of magic and miracles. That was a phrase, I don’t know where I came across it years ago, but it resonated with me to dwell in the energy of magic and miracles. And I absorbed it into my creative process and my creative journey and my spiritual evolution.

And in today’s episode, I am going to share something with you along those lines. As I record this for you, I’m Catholic and my family and I celebrate Advent and Christmas. Just this evening, my boys’ school had an Advent lessons and carols celebration and it was beautiful. And we’ve made it a tradition where we go to the Indian restaurant nearby first for dinner, and then we go over to where the program is being held.

And the church is dark, the children walk in, bringing light, which is a metaphor and a symbol and just a literal reality that never gets old for me. And then they sing. And it’s so beautiful. And then we came home, and amidst getting all the gifts ready for friends at school and teachers, I put the kids to bed and I’m finishing up some commissions. I’m working on some very special commissions that I’m shipping off in time for Christmas.

So I feel a little bit, as I’m recording this for you, like I should be saying, “’twas the night before Christmas...” because everyone is quiet now,

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everyone's sleeping, I've got the Christmas tree lights on. And I wanted to take a break from painting and record this for you.

It's a short episode this week, and again, I have a small gift for you here. But I do believe the shift that I'm talking about can produce enormous results in your life. It has been on my mind for a while to record a little episode with this one idea in mind.

I hope, it's my intent, that every episode is jam packed with gems and takeaways and insights for you. And today I want to keep it a little simple and I want to give you one clear thing to think about, especially as we near the end of the year and you can use the energy this time of year, harness that to reflect on the year passed.

And so what I wanted to present to you is that so much of the needless suffering we experience is caused by a mistaken identity and a misperception of our identity. It's so often, when we think our problems are enormous and our challenges are enormous and that we are so tiny and that we are in the grips of some enormous difficulty or challenge, when really, what's causing us so much pain is that we have that wrong. We are enormous.

And while I do not at all want to demean someone who is going through something very difficult and make it sound easier than it is, what I do want for that person listening, who's going through either something enormously difficult or, you know, a slight hiccup in the road, relatively speaking, what I know we can all benefit from is a reminder of our vastness, of our connection to the eternal of our infinite nature. And we can all be reminded of the need to slow down, pause, and plug back into that.

So what I want to share with you today – because sometimes I know that's easier said than done, and I have 1001 tools in my arsenal for accomplishing that, and one of those is this beautiful poem. It does it for me

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so many times and I've shared it with many friends and clients and they have loved it too. So I thought, dear listeners, that I would share it with you too. It's my holiday gift to you, my Christmas present to you, my end of the year gift to you.

It's Fairy Tales by Shu Ting, "You believed in your own story and climbed inside it, a turquoise flower. You gazed past ailing trees, past crumbling walls and rusty railings, your least gesture beckoned a constellation of wild vetch, grasshoppers, and stars to sweep you into immaculate distances. The heart may be tiny, but the world's enormous. And the people, in turn, believe in pine trees after rain, 10,000 tiny suns, a mulberry branch bent over water like a fishing rod, a cloud tangled in the tail of a kite, shaking off dust in silver voices, 10,000 memories sing from your dream. The world may be tiny, but the heart's enormous."

And so, my friends, I love the shift that this poem accomplishes for me and if you have the opportunity, even if you don't right now, later make the opportunity to look that up because it's beautiful spoken and this particular translation is by Donald Finkel.

So, this brings me to the part of the podcast where I want you to do more than just listen. I want you to lean in and really work with me, coach with me, take this information that I'm offering to you today, this poem, this idea, this reminder to saturate yourself in the energy of miracles, magic, and to do that with your vastness, and take that and integrate it into your life to accomplish true shifts.

So, two simple exercises for you. One will take you – well, they both might take you a while. The first is to set aside some time – and this is best done, I think, with a kindred spirit. So you can root for each other and egg each other on, especially when you want to quit too early.

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So, the exercise is to make a list of 50 things that you have done in the past year that you're really proud of, that you feel amazing about. I think it's really easy to sweep into the new year and just start thinking about the next things we're going to create or what we haven't created yet.

And if you've listened to any of my past episodes, I'm always talking about beginning at the end and going to that place where you've done it and feeling gratitude for that and feeling what that person, that future self feels like. And what I know is you can't do that effectively if you do not already have this practice of knowing how to receive and acknowledge and honor and celebrate, complete the circle by acknowledging what you have already done, and really allowing yourself to soak that in and change you before you're just onto the next thing.

So, 50 things, and if you guys want gold stars, keep going and make 100. And again, I think this is something too that's best done, maybe, with a friend, so that you can egg each other on in a positive way to complete at least 50, and if you can, go for the 100.

The second suggestion I have for you is more open-ended, and it's just a suggestion to spend some time contemplating this idea of your vastness, especially in relationship to whatever you are trying to create, or maybe a particular adversity that you're currently moving through. Again, I have like 1001 tools I use for this, but I also know some of the most effective tools that I have found, I've just stumbled into by contemplating what is going on here is that I feel so tight and I feel so small. And what if I can relax? And what if I'm wrong about this fact that I am so small and my problem is so big and overwhelming?

What if the only thing that has gone wrong here is that I have forgotten who I really am? One way I stumbled into this was when I was a child I would go to the back 40 of our farm, and if there was snow drifts out there, I would just wear a snowsuit. And if it was summertime, I'd lay in the grass.

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And there was a little knoll back there – and I grew up in Northern Iowa, so you can see for a long way, it's very flat. And there's such an expanse of sky. And it was so quiet. And I would just lay down on my back and look into the sky, into the middle distance, until it seemed like there was really no separation between me and the sky. It was like the sky kind of dissolved and I kind of dissolved into it.

And it was always an amazing feeling and I was always so surprised that that felt like home and safe and not terrifying because it was this shift in perception where I felt like I knew that I was small in relationship to the universe, but also that I was vast because I was the universe.

I was probably bored, so I probably fell into that. But it was something that was such a simple and yet profound experience that, like, to this day, I remember that state of being and I know now, having the training that I've had and the things that I've been through and the line of work that I am in, that there is something, there is a powerful shift in perception available there that does feel miraculous.

So that is my small gift, but with enormous love for all of you this holiday season and into this new year, whatever you're doing, whatever you're celebrating, I hope you are having an amazing time, you're surrounded by loved ones, if you want to be. But in any event, that you're surrounded by love.

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you have enjoyed this podcast and these episodes are valuable to you, the best thing to do is to subscribe, and the best thing to do to pay it forward is to go to iTunes and leave a review. I so appreciate you taking the time out of your day to do that and it helps me bring this work to more people.

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If you love this work and would like to take it deeper, my private coaching schedule is quickly filling up and I'm booked now through the end of January for private clients. I do have just two spots left in the transformational coaching intensive and retreat at Miraval Resort and Spa that I'm doing at the end of January. This is going to be epic, off the hook.

And so if you would like to join us for that experience, it's going to be the retreat of the decade and it is going to set you up and change the trajectory of the decade ahead. So if that is calling your name, you can send an email to support@leahcb.com with retreat in the subject line, and we will get information to you on whether spots are still available and how to apply for one of those spots.

So, what I want to leave you with today are those last lines, that last stanza from Fairy Tales, "The world may be tiny, but the heart's enormous." May you feel the miracle of your enormous heart. Have a beautiful week, everyone, happy New Year and I look forward to talking to you again soon.