

Ep #62: How to Harness Your Imagination



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With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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The imagination is not only a tool of the mind. It's a tool of your soul. It's a tool of your entire being. And to use it to its full effect, to harness the full power of it, you need to use it with the entirety of you; mind, body, spirit, soul. And what other faculties and aspects of ourselves are just barely beyond our knowing but we can sense are there? We must reach into those and use those to harness the infinite and the internal possibility of our imagination.

That is my quote. I searched long and hard for another quote that would say as much, until I realized, that's what I want to say, why don't I just say it? Because this is something that truly comes from my own thought and my experience. And at the same time, I want to say I also feel like it's not mine, but it is something that is available to all of us. It's just that maybe I haven't found it expressed or articulated yet by another human being. But it's something that I know is an essential tool for tapping into our creative genius, our creative potential, our potential for growing as extraordinary human beings. And so that's what I want to share with you today.

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, everyone, and welcome back. How are you all doing? How is January going for you? How is the first part of 2020? If you started on a high note and you are riding that wave, that's awesome if it didn't start on a high note, if it started maybe on a low and maybe you're just not feeling it yet, that's okay.

Even if you've been struggling for 10 years, know that change and a breakthrough is always just a thought and a moment away. You can always begin now.

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So, what's going on here? They're drywalling the house. Yay, finally. And I have sold out the massive magic retreat and intensive coaching experience at Miraval and this transformative coaching experience taking place within these weeks before and weeks after Miraval. So I'm definitely excited about that.

And also, because it's very much an expression of my own work in progress, because I want to share with you what I think about my two-million self is doing as an artist and as a coach. When I drill it down to the basics, one of the things she is doing is what she wants to do and creating things exactly how she wants to create it.

And one thing I've gotten very clear on is she does not nickel and dime herself anywhere. And that phrase came to me when I was doing my own work, and then again when I was working out thinking about this. And that's a powerful metaphor across the board, especially when it comes to our beliefs in ourselves.

So, I plan on doing another episode on this because if you see yourself nickel and diming yourself anywhere in your life, pull back and see where you are nickel and diming yourself on your belief. I see people doing this all the time, kind of being scarce and miserly with themselves on their beliefs, thinking that someday, they'll have earned through all that saving all of their belief, they'll have earned then the right to believe big in themselves.

And what I want to propose again, it's committing to that final destination, creating that destiny by making that decision, and then being wholehearted – and then we're going to talk today even more than wholehearted, your whole beingness, becoming that. And one of the beauties is that, in that, are not only the results that you're able to create, but also in the fullness of your belief that's available to you when you become that person.

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So even today with the intro I gave, I realized how far I've come on my own journey because I caught myself looking for a quote first for someone else to say something that I know and believe. So why do I need to find somebody else to say it? And besides, I couldn't find anyone else who was saying exactly what I wanted to say anyway.

Whereas, my future self has no problem just saying, "These are my original thoughts. These are my original ideas. I believe in them 110%. And she's getting quoted by other people, mind you." And I think that's a place where I see especially a lot of women hold themselves back. And again, the whys of that, a whole other podcast.

But I know, for me, one of the beauties and one of the great gifts of my future self is, like, when I go there and I'm in that energy, I am so just in the flow of wanting to think about what I want to think about, to express what I want to express, to contribute what I want to contribute, that I am not having that sort of constant self-evaluation and reflection of, but am I wrong? What if I'm wrong and I'm not fearing that completely irrational shame that comes over me and I know comes over many of you when you dare doing something, you dare speaking your truth, you dare to use your voice, you dare to use your gifts?

And then, should anyone say how dare you or who does she think she is, or who does he think he is, or man, he's getting too big for his britches or, actually, do you know you're wrong because so and so authority over here with more education than you contradicts you, what do you think of that? It's that we then get drenched in the same of, like, who did I think I am? I'm such a terrible person.

And we retreat into our shell and we miss the opportunity to again flow our gifts and our voice and then the world misses out on that as well. So, the intro, that was my two-million-dollar self, speaking to you now, that was an example of me doing what I tell so many of my clients, be her now, a play

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on the be here now wisdom and movement. And sorry, guys, because I do love my male clients too, but be him now, you can't play off that just as well. But it applies to you too.

Be that now and tie that big vision into the now at every opportunity that you can. And as I mentioned just a little bit ago, I am doing this with my coaching work this year and also with the retreat. So, kicking off the retreat, I wanted to hold something that was absolutely what my two-million dollar self would hold. And I also still have to work at this and be conscious and committed. And I want to make sure that I spell that out because when I talk to some of my clients or I have consults and hear from some of you, some of you get very frustrated and are hard on yourself, that there's something you want to believe.

There's the future self, but you're not feeling her or him yet. There's a belief you know you want to believe, but you feel so far off and you make yourself somehow wrong or doing it wrong because of that. The only wrong thinking going on there is that you're somehow having a wrong experience and that the only thing going on is you've just, like, misdiagnosed.

The thing is, you are at an early stage in the journey. There is nothing wrong with being at the stage of the process where you are, unless you make it wrong, and therefore think you're doing it wrong, and therefore give up, and therefore have to go through that stage over and over and over again expecting the beginning of the process to feel differently, expecting the beginning of the process to feel like the end of the process.

So, don't be disheartened. Don't be discouraged if you're not feeling like you're there yet or you get it intellectually but you don't truly believe it yet. That's okay. All that tells me is that there's more practice to do. And you can absolutely do that.

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You can find help to do that. You can continue listening to me. You can sign up for The Art School. You can sign up for private coaching with me or another excellent coach. You can get there. And it takes work and it takes practice and we are all humans and always evolving and growing. And this is something that I am constantly working on as well.

I have moments where I absolutely feel – I mentioned in a couple episodes prior to this – like you get a whiff of the ineffable. Like, I feel those dreams, like the creative work that she's doing. I feel it, like it happened last week, like it happened within the last year. And it's such a different energy, like I've actually had that experience.

But it will feel like it's here and gone. Like, I can't control it. But I believe – and this is a process I've used to create everything that I've created in my life, to create my first painting sale, to create sale after sale after sale of paintings, to create the coaching business that I have is I believe I can call that feeling back, and by going to that place where I summon that energy and practice holding it longer and longer and longer, that from that place, that helps shift my mind, my being, into becoming the person who just creates those results inevitably.

So, that brings me to one of the quotes I did consider using at the beginning of this podcast was from Albert Einstein, that quote – and there's variations on what he actually said, but this is the one I'm going to use, “The level of thinking that created a problem is not going to be the level of thinking that creates the solution.”

Another variation I've heard is that the level of consciousness that creates the solution is not the same level of consciousness which created the problem. And one of my takes on that, one of the many ways I think you can look at that is something that is a problem to you now, to your future self, it's not a problem at all. And you have to practice, not only what that thinking is, I believe, but what I think the translation I hear of it's a different

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level of consciousness resonates more with me and what I was talking about when I was speaking in the intro about the imagination not only being a tool of the mind, but a tool of our entire being.

We are so devoted to thinking that the majority of our being is dominated by our brain and our mind. And our reality is very much defined by what we focus on. Therefore, it seems to us like we are mostly brains walking around.

What I believe and what I have experienced is that there's often this knowing that doesn't seem to me to be the same kind of intellect that happens when I'm trying to figure out a hard calculus problem or when I am trying to learn how to play a piece of music for the first time or learn any skill for the first time. It's not the same part of my brain that I use to read a map. It wasn't the same part of my brain that I used to learn how to write a legal opinion or a legal brief.

It's not that analytical rational logical thinking part of the brain. It's a part that I use more of my sensing and the knowing. And sometimes, it's using all of my physical senses. And sometimes, I like to imagine too, you know, what if we have senses available to us that we're not using simply because we're not aware of them yet? And if we could just ask ourselves what else is possible, what else could I sense, what else could I know if I could at least imagine, if we could open ourselves up that way, what more would be available to us?

And the way that I've found my way into thinking of the imagination being something that my whole being can use and not just my analytical mind is because I found myself often in this same frustrating position where I could feel the dream, sense the dream, and then when my brain would go to, "How are we going to do the dream?" using the analytical part, then I would try to proceed down that route like a rational logical person.

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And I would just be, like, throwing myself into a brick wall over and over and over again. And I did that so much, I thought, well maybe there's a reason this isn't working out. And I would pause and then go back to that dream. And in no part of it was I just somebody who had gotten very good at breaking brick walls with her head and with her body. But the sense that I had was there was another way.

And I've talked about this in a podcast called The Third Way. And I do feel like that's a gift of many of our repeated frustrations and failures. It's not like the universe is punishing us by shutting us down, but it is this internal spirit, wisdom, intuition guiding you saying, "Not that way. You've tried it. See how that's working out? Maybe try something different."

I know the different way that I resisted for a long time was trusting myself more, not looking to some external authority of somebody who had created a lot of success, but who, in my heart, I thought I don't think that's what I'm built for, to do it that way. I think I can create something similar but in my own way. And I think part of the purpose of my life is discovering that third way. And then maybe I will have opened up another pathway for people who are like me to follow that.

But I did, and I do still have to work through overcoming the voices in the world, but mostly, it's always what I take on in my own brain, that say, "You can't do it that way. You can't be an artist because you feel paintings inside of you and then you find a way to dance them out of you. That's not legitimate." But once I work through that, that is absolutely how I work.

And then people will say you have to then market a certain way if you want to be a successful artist. You have to have contacts. You have to be in galleries. You have to know people. You have to first start in coffee shops and then go this way, or you have to go to some prestigious MFA and have a prestigious mentor and then go that way if you want to break into the scene. Or you have to be in the scene in order to be successful.

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But instead, I followed my own way and have used something that sounds so irrational to other people but have been able to create a successful career from that. But if I had just listened to logic or my analytical mind telling me, “This is going to be the safe linear step by step process,” I would not be where I am and I would not be who I am. I would not have had the experiences that I have.

And part of my challenge now, but also part of my opportunity for myself but also as a teacher, I feel my way into these things. And a lot of time, I don't have language for it yet because it's not something that's knowing. It's not something that first occurs to me in language. But a lot of times, it feels like following this something that is guiding me. Other times, again, it's this practice I have had of deciding that there is a place that I can go.

And I use the word place because it seems like there's a state of being because there is a feeling about it. And just like you do not experience what it's like to be in Italy by reading books about Italy. You can for sure learn a lot more and you can see pictures, you can start to imagine that way. But you also don't know what it's like to taste authentic Italian food by reading Italian cookbooks.

There is nothing like going to the place. There is nothing like being under the Tuscan sun to understand truly that that feels differently. There is nothing like being in Rome and then Tuscany and then the Cinque Terre, to really feel shifted by the energy of the place. And part of that shift is experiencing new aspects of yourself.

So a lot of people tell me they have trouble embodying new emotions. They have trouble imagining. So, one thing I want you to hear is to stop saying that because the moment you say that, you shut it down. I have a lot of compassion for that because it's not something that we're taught. And many of you just think you're bad at imagining things.

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And none of you are bad. You all have this capacity. Imagination is a faculty, a capacity. Think of it as like an invisible organ. It's like a heart, a brain, that we all have. But if you never knew you had it, how would you begin to know how to use it and use it intentionally? So first know, you have it. You have this imagination, this organ that, so far anyway, we can't see. We can't touch. We can't prove.

Though prove it to yourself by beginning to use it and seeing what kind of results it can produce in your life. And don't limit yourself by only entering through the brain. And I think this is where a lot of people get shut down because I'll ask clients, "Well how does that feel?" And they'll get all tight and be like, "I am so bad at embodying emotions."

I just did this with a client recently. So I know everyone has an in, so we stuck with it, and it turns out, she has this particular sort of feeling that she calls like Southern California. It's like the first time she experienced Southern California, she was like, "What is that feeling?" And she realizes that she can actually recall what it's like, how amazing she feels when she's in Southern California. She feels like her best self. She feels something in her that says, "This is home."

And I know that, for myself, that's usually an indication that I'm there, as I have that kind of response of, "I don't know what it is about this feeling, about this place, about this person, about this idea that I just had. But this feels like home. This feels like my home in the universe."

And it's amazing because it's like we've carried that with us all along, not knowing that that's what we are longing for until we experience it, and there's a recognition. I always find that so fascinating.

So, know that, if you can recall the feeling of a place, like my client could, like Southern California was set like that, for her, expression of a California state of mind. You can use that as a portal into your imagination and into

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using all of your being to summon the new consciousness and energy of your future.

So I know you all can recall a place where you felt your energy shift, you felt different. I am guessing most of you can recall a place, even where you had that feeling of this is home, I feel so like myself here. What I want to also offer you, there are possibilities and potentials out in your future even that you're carrying around inside of you right now where you will be in a place and you will feel even more like yourself than the best feeling you've experienced in the past, that that's available to you and the vehicle, the way of getting there, is believing that that's possible, believing that you have, an organ that's an imagination that's available to you and that you can strengthen and grow and strengthen that muscle.

But also, remembering never, never, never shut yourself down because you're not there yet. That's not necessary. And some of you will hear this and still continue to do it until you don't, until you hear this or hear someone else say it for the 1000th time that not believing in yourself is really an option. Believing in yourself is really available to you all the time. And for whatever reason, we don't get it until we get it.

The next thing I want to offer you is that you practicing this intentionally, and going back to the episode where I talk about the magic ratio, about being aware of how much of your mental real estate and how much of your day are you devoting attention it, it's not working yet, doubt, why is it not working yet, it never will work. I should be further along. I shouldn't be struggling.

And then, how much of your day do you devote to dwelling in the energy of, there's no way I'm not doing this, so why don't I make the most amazing process I can make it? And that's not to say that this whole process is rainbows and daisies. Again, as I shared earlier, I am always working on this. I committed to, "I am going to hold a retreat that my two-million-dollar

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self would hold. And I felt that energy and I made the decision, and then I could not sleep for the next two nights.

I felt like, oh my gosh, I have just committed so much for a deposit and what if no one comes and what if they don't like it? Which is then just my opportunity to do the work and to practice holding that energy even more strongly, to practice being so in the place of my two-million-dollar self is not thinking, what if no one comes? She's thinking, when am I going to hold the next one, because I have a waitlist?

She's thinking not what if this doesn't work out for me. She's thinking entirely about how can I create the most exquisite beautiful experience for these people? How can I love on them and offer them something that they will remember for the rest of their lives? How can I offer them coaching and an experience that they will take forward and think about every day for the next 10 years? How can I offer them something that is completely going to up-level their lives, support their soul's purpose, support their dreams?

And once I started the momentum of that energy and kept writing it, the ideas just kept coming, and I wasn't thinking about whether or not people are signing up. I was thinking about them and about making this an incredible experience, and then also not coincidentally, I believe, it sold out. And I have more people asking when the next one is going to be.

So, I wanted to share that example because I want to be transparent in that I am always working on this too and I want you to know that I spend a fair amount of time working on this. Also, I work on holding that place of belief, that energy of belief first of, like, what does it feel like to be here? And then I feel my way into, what thoughts does she have?

I don't just go, like I mentioned in the intro, what is she thinking? Okay, let me just think what she's thinking, but the rest of me isn't feeling it. Like, I go to that place where I am resonant with her energy, with the energy of

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somebody living, operating at that level. I hold that. I feel what it feels like in all of my body, in all of my mind. I try to expand the field around me of the energy that feels like that. I try to then hold it like outside of my meditations, that it is like this energetic field, like a filter, that everything that comes to me passes through that, and everything that comes from me also passes through that.

So, if I'm doing dishes because some people say, I'm not doing dishes as my future self, I find myself sometimes still doing dishes and having that thought and I'm like, well, I know my future self does what she wants to do and she loves her life, so how might she be experiencing this? But it is something that comes and goes, and it's very much akin to a physical training or a practice.

It's calling it back, holding it longer and longer, but ultimately, you can't get there unless you begin with that commitment of, first of all, it's possible. Second of all, I am doing it. There's no way I'm not doing it because it's going to be so much harder if, every time you have a thought come up that challenges it, if you're like, "Oh yeah, I guess I was wrong about that after all." And you spiral into shame and confusion.

And again, don't be so hard on yourself if that's what you're doing. You just maybe didn't recognize before now. You didn't have the awareness. But now you do. And bring yourself back. Know that it's possible for you. Know that it sounds weird maybe, but give it a try because maybe you've been going the route of trying to think positive thoughts, trying to solve problems from your current level of thinking.

Another quote I considered starting this episode with, like so many quotes from Dr. Joe Dispenza, including the quote about how you can't create a new reality from your same old personality. And that ties in with everything I teach and have been talking about, about a moonshot, how a shift in identity will unlock more than cleverness ever will. Because a shift in

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energy, a shift in identity, a shift of how you think about yourself and who you know yourself to be is what's available to you.

But I want to also point out that I am using words like know and identity because our language is so geared to us being centered in our brain, when really, I think there's a knowingness that occurs to many of us that doesn't pass through rational thinking and through that particular part of our brain. There are things that we can just know that we feel and once you consider that that's an option and once you know that that is legitimate, I think there's more and more intuition and creativity and power available to you when you don't make everything have to pass through the very narrow channel of the rational and logical mind. Because that channel is restricted by what's been done before and what's been thought before.

So if you are a visionary, if you are an artist, if you are a creative, you have to be willing to go to places that seem to many people, and maybe to you, to be unreasonable. You have to do things at times that to you feel unreasonable because to who you have understood yourself to be to this point, the thing that the real you, the essence of you that wants to flow through you wants to do will feel very unreasonable.

For many people, holding a two-million-self retreat at one of the top wellness destinations in the world would be something that I should only do after I have like two million in my accounting. I know, however, that this is the way that I create most powerfully is tapping into this energy. My reasonable mind was like, go out and find someone who is known in the world as being a great thinker, as being a visionary, as being a creative genius who has said the kind of thing you want to say. And quote them first on your podcast so your listeners are kind of warmed up and they won't be freaked out when you start talking about things that are maybe going to be hard for them to accept or understand in the beginning, especially because they're coming from you.

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Like, that's what my rational mind wants to say. But the way I want to live, which is like authentic and flowing creativity and willing to be me, to be everything I came to be, once I take off that filter of rational, I feel like there is so much I know that there's no way I should know it. There's so much I can do and create and contribute and experience that there is no rational way I should be the one that's able to do, create, experience, contribute that.

And I know this even more after having listened to and worked with so many of you. It's so clear to me, the ways we artificially hold ourselves back, dumb ourselves down, dilute ourselves, dim ourselves because of those voices. We have internalized that, say, who do you think you are? And we feel that if you just let it rip, the world is going to say, who does she think she is? Who does he think he is?

I hear so many amazing people struggle and worry about delusions of grandeur. And I want to be clear. I am not wanting to talk to anybody into delusions of grandeur. But if you're wanting to be objective, if you're wanting to really see truth and to be truly objective, then you also need to take the filter off and consider, where are you suffering instead and where is your life artificially stunted because currently you are engaging in – even unconsciously or unintentionally until now – in delusions of smallness?

And this whole topic of delusions brings me to something else that I really wanted to address this week. And that's to be clear on what truly is your sacred dream? Because I'm finding this is a good point at which to ask that of people again. What I have learned from my own life and from clients is that sometimes when we first envision our dream, it comes in through this filter of scarcity or it might be motivated by scarcity.

So the dream that we want to have is one that we want because it's going to somehow prove that we get to be who we've always wanted to be, that we are entitled to the inner life, to the state of mind, to loving ourselves, to

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having earned our place on this planet and to have earned some inner peace and inner acceptance.

So, a lot of times, the dreams maybe look amazing on the outside, but it's not really reflective of what you really want. It's just something that you think, if you're there, then you're going to have permission or be entitled to have this self-regard. And what I want to make sure you know is that that self-regard is what is available to you right now.

You don't have to achieve any kind of dream to have that sort of inner relationship, that sort of love for yourself, that kind of mental peace and knowing that you are deeply okay. I feel like I've shared this a number of times, but I'm having these conversations and it still comes up with clients and so I want to be clear, you know, from my own experience, what has been so stunning to me about dreams and visions, there are the beautiful paintings and there are books. But it's also the freedom to be who I want to be and the feeling that I do get to create the life that I want to create.

And it's also that the volume is so turned down on second guessing and on the inner critic and on constant self-judgment. It's this place where I get to contribute what I want to contribute. I get to be in conversations that I want to be in. It's this very particular kind of peace. It's this feeling of, like, this is home for me. This is where I am meant to be.

And so, that particular feeling, that energetic state, that state of being, that way of being, I try to say this as many ways as I can as many times as I can because you never know when someone's really going to hear it and have it make sense and they're going to get it. That's what we're ultimately after. And that's where the work is to begin, is to cultivate that now, to not need results to make us feel that way, to not need results to prove that we are someone that's like worthy of feeling that way or thinking of ourselves a certain way or having a certain opinion of ourselves, not thinking we have to create results so that we have earned the right to our belief in ourselves.

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If you think I was talking to someone last week who moved mountains to be able to have her two children enrolled in this school that sounds so beautiful and amazing, she just made it happen. And what I wanted her to see, like, what a mother can do is amazing. And that comes from love. That comes from belief.

Like, I know what it is to, like, see my children and think, oh my gosh, what are they going to be able to do? They are so incredible, like such remarkable souls and minds. And there's nothing I wouldn't do to facilitate their dreams and their evolution and their flourishing. And it's something I still have to be very intentional about, is bringing that own energy of belief, that level of deep love and regard for my own life here and what my heart and soul are craving to bring that energy to support my flourishing.

So again, when I say moonshot, I don't want you to feel like that's something that's not a moonshot unless, like, your head is exploding and your name is splashed all over the newspapers or unless it involves eight figures. I think the essence of a moonshot and a sacred dream is calling to you to become who you really are in the world. It's inviting you to feel at home in the world and to feel the relaxed and centered power of that.

And that's a revelation and it's an epiphany, and then it can also knock people off the track for a while and be unsettling because, if all your life you've been very successful from a place of striving and you've been motivated by scarcity and trying to prove yourself, there's a sense of like a hecticness. And I think it's a lot of energy that is not in your heart. It is like head, neck, shoulders up.

Even for me and my clients, many of them describe it the same way. It's like this big buzzing manic kind of energy that's very head-centered. Whereas, when I click in and when I've led clients through this exercise of, like, you drop into who is the true you in this world? If you let everything else drop away, the true you living powerfully, powerfully expressive, still

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vulnerable, still human, still needing to use courage, still you feel pain, you feel loss, you put yourself out there, you care. But it's from this clean heart-centered heart-expansive place.

When you are committed to living that way, it's not dramatic. And so I think if we've been addicted to this cycle of, like, it's not a dream unless I am feeling very manic and desperate about it and unless I'm feeling stressed and pressured, then when we drop into this place of like, actually, what I'm wanting from, for instance, my two-million dollar self is this sense that not only did I do it, but it's just what I can do over and over again. I can do what I came to do and there's a steadiness to it. I'm not surprised by it.

I had a client one time, she was wanting coaching on prices of paintings. And I said, how do you think it will feel when you sell that painting and you have a call and someone wants to buy the \$70,000 painting? And she said, I'll be so excited, I'll be screaming. I'm like, no you won't because if we have done this right, you have become the person that is grateful and also like you're, of course, of course I did that.

I just coached another client today who is growing his business as an entrepreneur and moving beyond \$10,000 months as a newer entrepreneur. And I said, what are you wanting from your future self? And he said, some assurance. So I said, go to that place where the future self needs no assurance. Because this particular client is an incredible athlete. He's done these amazing races in the last year, super fit. And I said, imagine if I were like, hey you did it, you just did three Spartan races in like three days, that's so awesome.

And he gave me a strange look, like why are you so excited, that's just what I like to do, it's not that big of a deal. Yes, I love to do it, I'm glad I get to do it, but why are you being so crazy about it? I'm like, exactly, you just have such a high regard for yourself, it's what I've been talking about all along, cultivating a way of being, a very extraordinary way of being, but it's

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not extraordinary in that it feels like a stretch or you feel like you're trying to prove something and there's a desperation to it and a constant worry that, what if I don't make it? That's who you are. And really extraordinary results flow from that.

And the other part is, sometimes extraordinary results don't flow from that because that's life. But if you've cultivated this extraordinary way of being, you're able to navigate that in a strong way. You have a resilience that doesn't require you to white knuckle your belief or your need to pick yourself back up and prove yourself again or keep yourself from backsliding. There's a steadiness and there's a roundedness to it all.

And let yourself have this as a process. Don't deprive yourself of growth by saying you should be further along. And I also don't want to be misleading in that I don't struggle and that I don't do work. I do often and I also feel like it's my responsibility and also my desire to work with myself to be an example of what's possible to get to a place where then when I talk to you, I am not just spewing my hurt and my messy mind all over you.

I want to get to place where it's useful for you, and this is not some, I don't know, some performative thing where I just show up and messy for the sake of being messy. I want there to be a point for you and value. And so, for instance, with the retreat, I for sure had the thoughts and the fear come up of, what if I put down \$25,000 to \$30,000 and no one comes and I just eat that? And do I still want to go forward knowing that that is one of many different outcomes and it's one that my brain was sure poking me with?

And I decided that I did and I decided, like, why would, and if it came to the place where I went all in and put my heart into it and communicated to everyone that I was doing this amazing life-changing retreat, first, what would I make it mean if no one came? What would my two-million-dollar self make it mean? What were the gaps between that? What were the opportunities for me to grow and also just financially?

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We are currently building a house, and I can tell you, my husband would not be happy if I were like, well, not only did I miss my projected income for this month, so I won't be contributing, actually I've dipped into my reserves, to the tune of negative 30.

That sort of thing, for sure, would have brought up a lot of difficulty and a lot of challenge. You know, I have clients who are mothers and I know what it's like. It's one thing to put yourself out there, but something else entirely hijacks your body when you've decided, you know what, I'm willing to risk what the world thinks of me to go for it, to be an example of what's possible. I'm really willing to risk my savings, to put my money where my mouth is and to be an example of what's possible and to demonstrate what I can do and go for my dreams.

So, for instance, I did that, I worked through that, and then it's like my limbic system, that reptilian brain hijacks me and is like, oh but I know how to get her to retreat. I will terrorize her with fears that somehow her growth is going to be detrimental, tremendously detrimental to those she loves the most. And that fear, these terrible feelings of shame and dread will wash over me.

I have, again, clients that are mothers and it's not just me, I have learned, that has this catastrophizing that goes towards whenever I grow. I've gotten over like what will happen to me, but it's like my brain, the nightmares during the day will hijack me and make it about my growth and my success when I try to go to how good can it get. It intensifies, like, that waking nightmare of what could happen to my children.

And that's just another way that that brain tries to draw us back. And so that's why I want to also encourage you to not dream in isolation and to not go for your dreams and not try to grow in isolation, because it does bring up so much and there's so much to work through. It brings up shame. It brings up fear. And it is – I cannot say how profoundly powerful it is to have a

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community that's skilled in talking about this, that's constructive, that says, hey, I get it, I felt that too, here are ways we can work through this, so that you're not thinking, oh my gosh, what's wrong with me, or you're not thinking, oh my gosh, that catastrophizing, that's really some sort of negative, intuitive, foreboding that my soul's flourishing is inevitably linked to some sort of hurt to those that I love. Because it's a pattern, my friends, I've seen it five times in the last week if I saw it once. And it's not just with my women clients. It's with men too.

So I am saying all this, again, because I want to make sure you know that your dream is your sacred dream and it's not something where you're trying to prove something in order that you might have the kind of self-regard and self-love that you are entitled to right now and that you have to take responsibility for creating independent of any conditions. You have to give yourself permission and learn how to do that in the right now.

And I also don't want you to be holding yourself back artificially because of any of these fears and ongoing narratives that somehow your growth only and ever comes at the sacrifice of others that you love dearly or other values that you love dear.

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 work with me and really coach with me. So, I got on a tangent away from talking about imagination as being more than just a faculty of our mind.

I want you to not need to know exactly what I mean or how to do it, but to open yourself up to contemplation. If your body has the faculty of imagination, what can it feel like to use more embodiment in feeling your vision and feeling the vibe of something, the vibration of something, and feeling a resonance with something and feeling a shift?

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Think about my metaphor of going to Italy. How can you with your imagination not just think about it, not just think about his or her thoughts or words, but how can you be there now? How can you use your imagination to go to that place and make it multi-dimensional, make it multi-sensory? Let it shift the cells of your beings in ways that are beyond your rational mind and understanding.

In other podcasts and other times, I'd like to talk more about being an energetic learner, but for now, I just want to introduce it as something for you to contemplate. What I'm talking about might feel really foreign or abstract, and yet at the same time I know you've experienced shifts. I hear people use this language all the time, like a revelation, a shift. They just knew something.

So spend more time lingering there. What does that mean? Spend more time in deep wonderment and imagination and just asking yourself the question, what would it be like to not just imagine with thought and my mind, but with my whole being? And what could happen if I knew that that was actually a faculty or an organ available to me and that I could exercise that more intentionally and at will?

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

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I do currently have a six-week waitlist for private coaching, so if working with me one on one is something that you are strongly considering for 2020, send an email to support@leahcb.com with discovery consult in the subject line. That way, we can be sure to get you on the schedule to set up a conversation and we'll discuss what you're looking for in a coach and if we're a great match for what you need.

I do want to close today with words from someone who has always ignited my imagination and has inspired me to imagine beyond my current level of thinking. And that is someone who, to me, feels like the godfather of a lot of this work, even before I knew I'd be doing this work. I had a poster from the Twin Cities Science Museum of him on my wall as a young girl and a teenager, along with New Kids on the Block. And it's Albert Einstein.

And one of the quotes I have long adored of his seems fitting to close this podcast, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." I hope you have plenty of time to spend imaging beyond the limits of your current imagining, my friends, and have a beautiful week. I look forward to talking with you next time.