

Ep #73: (Part 2) Asking Yourself the Hard Questions with Nicole Whiting



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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

Ep #73: (Part 2) Asking Yourself the Hard Questions with Nicole Whiting

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That was a clip from the second half of my conversation with ultra-runner and coach Nicole Whiting. I know that's a longer intro than usual, but as I've said so many times before in this podcast, I want to bring you the best of what I have that will help you make life work.

And so, even if you only have two minutes this week, I know that in that short snippet of from our conversation, Nicole outlines the way, as any good Sherpa would do, for what will get you through whatever uncharted territory and challenge you are facing, either currently or in the future.

Whether that's the wilderness of a creative project or the crisis of a global pandemic. And the rest of the conversation is the bomb as well. So, please

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listen in as I bring you the second of this inspiring conversation with my colleague and dear friend, Nicole Whiting.

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 my friends and welcome back. I'm trying to talk loud and clear, while also whispering at the same time because once again, I am bringing this to you post bedtime. Post my children's bedtime. They should be sleeping anyway because we are just adapting to the new schedule, per shelter-in-place, so a lot of my work is shifting to: I'm getting up at four and staying up later, if I have things to do.

The really remarkable thing is, is that when I have coaching calls, or if I'm teaching a class during the day, my family has gotten so amazing – knock on wood. Now that I say this, there's probably going to be a disaster next week.

But they've gotten really good about honoring that boundary and being quiet and not coming in. Not that disruptions never happen, but so far, I really appreciate that. And again, if that's the most challenging thing that we have to deal with – that I get up early and stay up late. I actually love getting up early and especially now with a dog, because when I get up early, then she wants to be taken out, and I love being outside at that time of morning.

It reminds me of when I was growing up and we'd have to get up at, very early, dark-0'30, to take care of the chickens before going to some sort of

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workout practice or school. There's something about that very early morning, you know, when night is just fading away, but the stars are still bright, I love being outside. In Michigan in this time of year, it's nice and crisp and it just makes me appreciate just being alive in a very ordinary and extraordinary moment like that.

So, I've been thinking a lot about the appropriate tenor for this podcast and this time and what you most need right now. You certainly... I am not a news source, nor do I want to be. And I'm sure you have plenty of them. I don't think you need from me, coping.

What I want to offer you, is something – it's not entertainment because what I want to offer you is something better than an escape, but something that leaves you feeling stronger and better than hopeful; stronger. And that you know the difference, like that serenity prayer.

Yeah, that's it. That you have serenity and you're empowered. You know the difference between what you can control and what you can't control. And that you feel really, just like always, that with each episode, that even in small ways I've helped you shift the needle in your life in meaningful ways.

I'm no FDR. I don't have a fireside. Well I've got a little candle. There's a woodstove in the farmhouse. But I was thinking about fireside chats and that warmth and what our human spirit needs in times like these. And a quote that I love and I really work to abide by, I have it on the bulletin board in my studio, is that – Martha Beck told me this at a retreat I was fortunate enough to attend of hers back in the day, and it is, "People don't need more information; they need more stories to have faith in."

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And that is not to say, I'm not saying to be oblivious or be uninformed in these times. I think that's important and that's wise. I think my role is to provide stories for you. Stories to have faith in. Stories that allow you to see the brilliance and strength and magnificence and beauty in the human spirit, and then you feel that and are able to access and find that in your own life and in your own self.

Again, I loved this conversation with Nicole. And, like I mentioned last week, it happened weeks before we really knew the extent to which things were going to go down in the U.S. I think we were still, a little bit, in blissful ignorance in thinking, "Maybe it's not going to happen like that here."

And now that it's unfolding everywhere. And again, hearts and prayers go out to everyone, all over the world who is ill, has lost loved ones. If you're in the medical profession and you're fighting on the front line. If you have suffered economic loss and you're going through economic hardship, our hearts and prayers go out to you.

Again, I want to offer you something that I hope edifies your already amazing spirit. And, better than inspires you, but gives you some tools to keep going and to keep looking for those ways to thrive, no matter what is happening around you. Insist on the thriving of your spirit. Insist on the triumph of your spirit.

I woke up this morning, again, super early, dark-0'30, 4 a.m. with a huge weight on my chest and my heart. Honestly, one of my feelings was, "Oh gosh, I had pneumonia last year", if you remember, if you've been following the podcast. I was on bedrest for three or four days. It really took months for my lungs to feel like they were normal again and my lungs are ordinarily in extraordinary shape. I'm a runner, I'm an athlete and I had never

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experienced something like days where it was so hard to breathe. Or you could just feel your systems powering down.

So there was that, but then there was also this, just this incredible weight and I'm sure many of you, by now, have read the *Harvard Business* article that's going around about grief and the collective grief, that is probably part of what the weight was that I was experiencing, for the collective and for sure personally, I know many people that are already affected - economically affected, job loss or concerned about the markets. It's on everyone's mind.

So again, I'm doing my own work and thinking, "I'm going to do what I can do." And one thing I have been doing, I offered a free group coaching call this last week. I loved that! I love doing that. Thank you so much if you came to the call. We had another amazing turn out. Questions were amazing.

I am always, not surprised anymore by the extraordinary people in this community, but I'm still grateful and in awe for the vulnerability, the courage, thoughtfulness and the way people are seeking to grow and to live in their life in this way. In this authentic and meaningful way. It gives me life. I know from a lot of the feedback I received after the calls, that it does for the others as well.

So, I will be continuing those into the foreseeable future, playing it by ear. And I'm also offering, for those who want to go even beyond the group coaching call, I'm trimming down the rest of my schedule to offer an immersive, four-week art school pop-up, immersive program.

This is going to be game-on coaching. I'm going to coach whoever is in that group - I don't know if we will have ten people, I don't know if we will have

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40 people – I've just decided that whoever wants to come, I have made it an incredibly low price. I've never done anything like this before. I just wanted, for anyone who has ever wanted coaching and right now, wants to thrive through these times. Wants to continue to, not only hold onto to their dream, but to grow through this and to contribute as a person and through this coaching work to help people be these little nuclear cores that go out into the world, of goodness and positivity and light at these times.

So, I was telling a friend that I was planning this and talking to one of my assistants the other day, and I just had this energized feeling of being in the war room for light workers. I have so much to give right now.

There's no barrier for anyone to get coaching at this point. You can come to the group call. If you want the immersive process. If you really want to be laser focused. If you want to work on abundance and money, or your creativity, your career goal. If you want to use this time, if your furloughed, you have more time on your hands, you're having a hard time being focused.

And you now you're like, "I'm healthy, why don't I just write my novel now?" Now's the time, "I'm healthy, why don't I use this as a time to become more masterful at playing the guitar or to send out my portfolio for when this is over, so I'm ready to launch in the world." Bring it!

And I am going to knock your socks off. The community is also going to knock your socks off. I often say, "A rising tide lifts all ships," and that you get into a group with me and there is no way out but up. This time, I have so much energy around this. I can already feel it. It's going to be unparalleled.

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So, if you want to join in on that, we will be posting information on my website soon, www.leahcb.com You can also check in with me on Instagram. I'm @leahcb1 and I will also be sharing the information with my email list, as soon as it's ready.

I know that every that's going on right now is also an invitation to reexamine priorities, to reexamine who we are and why we're here, where we place our attention and focus. One of the things I'm more sure of than ever is how essential creativity is.

Creativity is the ability to direct the power of our mind and life force. To interact with the world, but not succumb to it. To play and engage with the world and direct our minds to who we want to be. To think greater than conditions that want to define us. This is what is so spectacular and extraordinary about us, as human beings.

And as Nicole says so beautifully in this episode, to her being creative is being a good problem solver. So, listen in. I know you will love the literal stories she tells, and also the endless metaphors and take-aways that you can apply to whatever mile you're in, to whatever finish line is your dream. Enjoy!

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Nicole: Bringing this up to it, I think this is part of art too because I really believe that ultra-running is my art, we give a part of ourselves to every piece of art that we create. There's a piece of that.

I've done a handful of races on Mount Hood and that's where my 100-mile races have been. I've done 50-mile races up there. I always believe, like it

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just holds something special to me because I feel like part of myself was found and also left on the mountain there.

I think that's also such a piece of art and creativity. Part of that is who we are. I wouldn't be the same person without Mount Hood. It's just part of who I am, and I left part of myself out there. In the spirit world and years down the road, we all leave a piece of ourselves.

Leah: I like to reiterate that line in everyone's story. Everyone's art is good, including those parts where you are instinctively throwing your hands up and you feel humiliated and you're like, "No, don't look. Don't see this. Don't see this."

What a powerful metaphor is that for in our personal lives, whatever it is we're wanting to create in the world and offer to the world. Like it's who we are. And yet, that thing we do, where we're like, "Don't look at me in my organic humanity. Don't look at me in my most vulnerable moment."

And yet, that too, is our story. And that too is our art, and such, you don't want to cut out that part of your film. Because not only is it funny in retrospect...

Nicole: Gives you something to laugh at, right?

Leah: But it also is then, what I want to go back to is, so much of a story, so much of amazing stories are like what's not said explicitly, but what you read between the words. And the thing that I want to pull out though, since this is a podcast for my listeners, what was between your words is, why did you not quit?

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Nicole: Why did I not quit? I have a hard rule. I'll never quit on myself. If I don't make a cutoff, if there's something medically wrong with me, if something happens that I physically can't go forward, then that's one thing. But I can't quit on myself. I did that; that's another one of those things. I didn't honor myself. This isn't honoring. When I show up, I'm going to honor myself to the best of my abilities.

I told myself, "Finishing a 100-mile race is really just being able to be a good problem solver." And so many times in life, we forget that we have the answers and that's what I was coming back too. Ask yourself the questions, find the answers. What do I do now? What's the next best right thing? What's the next best decision? What do I need to do to make it to the next aid station?

I just broke it down into 5-mile chunks. And from mile 30 until the end, I drank Coca-Cola. There was no food happening. Like for 70 miles, it was like Coca-Cola was the thing and Imodium. And maybe some Zofran, but that was it. And so often, we are like, so often we're looking at mile hundred, we forget that we are in mile 26. We don't even get to face the problems of mile 100, if we don't solve the problems of mile 26. If we don't honor ourselves at miles 26, we are never going to be able to honor ourselves at mile 100. And that's really what - it was like, "I can't quit. Somebody can pull me, but I can't quit on myself. That's not who I am."

I had a mantra. Literally, as I was taking steps, I was saying, "You are magnificent. You are brave. You are courageous." I probably said that to myself for miles, I remember repeating with every single step.

Sometimes that is what I needed. Every time I would fall back on, "How am I going to do this? How am I going to stay up on my... how am I not going to get dehydrated? What's going to happen?"

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I just kept telling myself, “You’re made for this.” Aren’t we all? Do forget that sometimes? We’re made for this. We’re made for the human experience. I think we forget that. We lose sight of that. This is what it’s all about.

Leah: So, you’re running the mile you’re in, including if that mile gives you intense G.I. problems...

Nicole: Diarrhea; it gives you diarrhea, yes.

Leah: Yes, and makes you have to pull off the trail many times. Talk about what it is to be creative as a human is, you said, to remind that we are made for this and we’re equipped. We are problem solvers. I think what is creativity, but learning to direct your mind, being the master of your imagination and mind and direct it towards yes, the 100-mile finish line, and also, yes, the mile we’re in.

And that process of mastering the mind and feeling everything. It’s not about repressing. What you’re talking about is not shoving things down and doing this sort of self-violence of denial. It’s, you’re letting yourself feel all the things and accessing a higher level of consciousness to be like, “Here’s what we’re about”. And what is... “I am magnificent”. Where the ... What do ...

Nicole: I said, “I am magnificent. I am brave. I am strong. I’m courageous.” I have these... I just kept saying whatever felt like I needed to remind myself of. I said it to myself. That’s another thing that we don’t do. Tell yourself things that you need to hear. Honor your voice. Don’t always wait for somebody else to give you that honoring. We get to honor it now and we get to tell it ourselves.

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Leah: The other thing that you do is, I can hear it in your voice and the way you're talking to yourself, because a lot of the work that we both do is with, you know, you have someone that comes with one set of beliefs that doesn't match yet the beliefs they are going to need to help them cross that finish line. And it's a training process to learn how to speak to yourself in order so that your brain starts doing it more on autopilot than it usually does.

It's the way in which you're speaking to yourself. There is honor in your voice and energy in the way you're saying that. "I am magnificent. I am magnificent. I am courageous. I am brave." You're not saying like somebody who's trying to feed themselves a load of bullshit. You're craving a road down to your heart with the energy in those words. And you're also, over and over and over again.

It's done of this business of, "Okay, yeah I get that. Say these words to yourself. My brain gets it done; I don't have to think about it again. I've read that book on self-love and self-kindness." But it's the athlete's way that we can learn from and all become spiritual athletes of, "No, it's again and again and again and again." Almost in the rhythm of one foot in front of the other.

Nicole: And to approach it with love. So often, we approach it from the other angle. So often in life, the voice is coming from, "If I just beat myself up enough, I'll get there." The approach of, "I'm going to love myself so much," that it's like a warm hand on my back, but it's myself. I'm going to come right alongside myself and love myself until we get there. Because I did it the other way for a long time. I'm going to beat myself up to trudge through.

Leah: Me too. I know a lot of listeners have been there too. And they can do it that way and they finish what the 100-mile race is for them, that way.

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And they can get the belt buckle or gold medal or whatever it is. But I think we can get to that point, like you did, where you either get to a crisis point, where you're like, "I can't do this anymore." And you're also not the kind of person that quits on your life. With those two things in hand, I don't quit on my life and I also I can't keep going this way, then your question, "What if I don't change?" Sit with that.

But then too, another reason I wanted to have you on is because you are this example of someone doing extraordinary things in an extraordinary way. And it's that way of love, it's not self-punishing. It is this extraordinary love and it's not soft and sitting back on the couch and not training when you don't feel like it and giving up. It's not settling. It's very fierce.

Nicole: Thank you.

Leah: You're super fierce.

Nicole: Thank you. That's a huge compliment.

Leah: Well, it's true. So, my boys are home from school today. We had parent teacher conferences this morning. We were walking across the field and went into the house because they knew I had this interview.

And they we like, "Who are you talking to?" And I said, "My friend and college, the one that runs in the mountains with a gun." Because my boys are like, "When is she coming to visit?" So, I want to like – that's just another Nicole story I wanted to give because it's something that for you is just so every day. And it's such an awesome story. Do want to share how you do your training runs where you live?

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Nicole: So, I live in Northern Idaho and we live at the base of the mountain in the town that I live. But, I mean, there's lots of animals up there. And so, I do often run with a gun. Especially if I'm by myself. Mostly just to be able to have some sort of line of defense to scare away an animal if they're getting too close or something like that. Sometimes I'm tentative on telling people that because a lot of people have thoughts about that. So, this is good! See, this is a whole other...

Leah: I just put it out there!

Nicole: Yeah, to like everyone. Like a whole other level 9 of accessing of, "Oh, I wonder what they think now."

Leah: Well, I think you're extraordinarily brave because when you told me - I know how this conversation came up because going back to your decision to doing Ironman. And when you had come from this people pleasing place and you're accommodating to everyone in your life. I'm sure no one listening can relate to what it's like to just give yourself the leftovers...

And then, if you know anything about training for an Ironman, there is no way you can train for an Ironman in the remainder of the day. Training for an Ironman is like a job in and of itself. I know when I did half-Ironmans, I trained at least 15 hours a week.

Nicole: Yeah, it's definitely a part time job. I will say that I'm probably the queen of doing the least amount of training and being able to complete the greatest goals. Actually, because of the way my life is, my training's not perfect. I mean, it is, sometimes, haphazard. I'm sure my coach is rolling her eyes at me half the time. But I have such a belief, so much of athletics, when you're talking about racing, is your mental state.

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And I have done just as much mental work as I have physical work. At the end of the day, I rely on that a lot. It definitely is a part time job to train for 100-mile races and Iron Mans and endurance sports. But I'm also really good at giving myself the benefit of the doubt. Like, "You can do this." Nothing's perfect. Another metaphor for life, nothing's like...

Life just isn't optimal all the time and that's very much, I feel like my training's never optimal, but I do the best that I can with the time that I have. I still show up. I remember thinking – I had gotten injured before my first 100-mile race – and I was like, "Gosh, I probably shouldn't do this."

Like, the 2 months before it, I had barely got to run. I was like, "Wait a second. What would someone that runs 100 miles, do?" If I want to be that person, I need to think the way that they think. I'm pretty sure they wouldn't just be like, "Yeah, I'm just going to bag this." They'd show up and try. And I was like, "The worst I can do is get pulled, right?" But it's just asking myself [dog barks]. Oh, sorry. There's my dog. That's Wilson. He hears something outside, Wilson.

Asking yourself what would that person that you want to be do? It was, at the end of the day, I was like, "Okay. That's I'm doing. I'm going to show up and try and see what can happen" and I finished.

Leah: I love that. That's acting as your future self. Not just in theory.

Nicole: Embodying it.

Leah: Not only walking your talk, running your talk. The metaphor in that, that you can apply to the creative process. What would someone that, for anyone listening, whatever that next level is for you and your creativity and

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your life. What would that person do? How would they complete this next work? How would they show up?

I think your whole story about the race – the last 100-miler, where you were sick. I'm going to have to go back through and take notes because it was line by line, you can pull that and apply that to the process of finishing whatever it is, the process of moving toward your finish line, completing whatever it is you want to complete. It's an instruction manual.

It just occurred to me, when you were saying – when you were just now talking about the physical part of training, that we spent very little part of this conversation talking about that. Because you and I both know and really believe deeply how much of it is the mindset, is emotional, spiritual journey of it.

And you're like, "Yeah, and then, you show up and you move. And you show up and you write." But if you get that inner game right, that is so much of it.

Nicole: Right, because you can have optimal training physically and if you don't show up with the right mindset, it doesn't matter. If you show up with any ounce of willing to give up on yourself when it gets hard, that's what you're going to do.

Leah: You also said something so important about when the conditions or the training isn't optimal, that doesn't mean you can't carry on and finish.

Nicole: This last race too, I would say, wasn't optimal either and I had a 30-minute P.R. I beat... I had diarrhea for 40 miles and I still came in 30 minutes faster than I did the year before. Sometimes making the best out of a hard situation can create a beautiful experience.

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Leah: Well, and then too, I got off track about why you run packing heat. I think it was the first time we met, and I was asking you, “So how long are your runs?” Because how long are some of your training runs?

Nicole: I don't, in a training run, ever run more than 30 miles, is the longest. Unless I'm doing a 50-mile race. But it's really more doing back to back and honestly, I don't run a whole lot more than 20 miles, but I might do two – a 20 miler on Saturday and then a 20 miler on Sunday. So, it's really teaching your body to run tired, another great metaphor of life. How do you run on tired legs? You take another step.

Leah: Well and too, what's behind all of this is that there is intention and strategy and design. But you don't go out and try to run the 100 miles just cold and ...

Nicole: Most people don't.

Leah: Most people don't. You're building... You're training your body to run tired, so you do those back to backs and in a 20 mile or 30 mile... Does a 30-mile training run take 6 hours?

Nicole: Well that is a really hard question. It depends, if you are running... I mean and here's the beauty about trail running, no two trails are the same. One you might be climbing 5000 feet; another one you might be climbing 1000 feet. So, 30 miles could take you 6 hours, it could take you 10 hours.

It's really just time on your feet, being in the experience, being in the moment, but really six to eight hours is probably the longest day that I really go out and do. It's so different for each person.

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I am not a front of the packer; I'm definitely a back of the packer. So, I get to enjoy the scenery a little bit longer than some other folks out there.

Leah: Taking it in.

Nicole: Taking it in.

Leah: So, I knew this was the duration of your runs, I knew that a lot of your races happen in mountainous areas, so I knew that you're running in mountains. So, my question to you, that first time was, "What about mountain lions, grizzly bears?" And her just like, very blasé was, "Oh, I just pack heat." As one does.

Nicole: As one does, when you are from Idaho. I think if you look at statistically, it's really easy to let that be, like I always say the road bumps in the road are the excuses that we give all of our power to. That could be one of those things, that fear you give all of your power to.

I think I told you this story too, if that's the way I go by mountain lion, what a cool story my kids are going to have, "My mom was eaten by a mountain lion." What a cool story that would be. It's just something that I don't give my attention to. If that problem arises, I'm going to do the best that I can to solve that problem in the moment and that's just the kind of confidence that I have to have with anything. If this problem comes up, I'm capable of solving it.

Leah: That's an excellent segue because I want to make sure we round out this conversation, with talking about how you impart this to the women that you work with because you are extraordinary, and I also know that you're someone who believes deeply that this is available to all of us.

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Nicole: I believe that I have this idea called the 100-mile dream. My 100-mile dream, I'm still on this journey, but everybody gets to have one, that's available to everybody and it might look different to everybody.

Somebody's 100-mile dream might be creating a piece of art, somebody else's might be running a 5K, somebody else's might be writing a book.

But whatever that thing is, that thing that you believe will make you, refine you to the person that you are supposed to be, we all have access to that. But we are so afraid of what we are going to feel when we do that. My encouragement is step into it, then we at least know what we are dealing with.

Leah: What would you say to the person who's like, "My biggest fear is that I have this dream and I will discover that I can't complete it, that I don't have what it takes."

Nicole: I don't know if there's ever that piece of like, "I don't have what it takes." If we're talking about something physical, like there may be a lot of people who physically can't do 100 miles for whatever specific reason.

But I think what people are really saying is, "I don't want to feel that uncomfortable." They're using that again as this armor of, "But like that's going to be... I don't want to feel that feeling." Whatever that feeling is. And if you can commit to the grievances and decide that you're willing and able to feel whatever is going to come up, then it just is what it is.

You can also, in the process, honor yourself because I think that very often, we think we want something and we get into it and we are like, "This really isn't what I thought it was going to be." That's okay. There is an honoring in that and there's a lesson in that journey too, but I think that the big thing is

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that most of the time, “Well I’m just not capable of this”. It’s like, you don’t want to feel that feeling. You don’t want to feel that uncomfortable.

Leah: So that’s brilliant. I want to take a moment and pause there because I think you’re dead on. If you are listening and you’ve had that moment or that realization of you are holding back, you are not really going for it because of this fear that maybe you won’t be able to complete it.

What if you are wrong about that? What if you are wrong about that fear? What if you think that fear is saying, “I’m legit because I’m telling you here, I’ve just got some legit inside information on you and you’re not cut out for the job?”

What I hear Nicole saying is that you’re feeling a fear, but that it’s not saying that. What it’s saying that this going to be uncomfortable. Because if you can decide to honor yourself and I talk a lot about commitment and deciding your destiny and being the ultimate creative act is to decide, “I am going to finish this. I am going to honor myself by finishing this, there’s no way I am not finishing this.”

Then what’s left to you is to be with that uncomfortable feeling, is to feel uncomfortable and then what’s left after that is, “Then how am I going to do the next 5 miles, and how am I going to do the next 5 miles, and what’s going to be my mantra, what song, what anthem am I going to sing to myself along the way?” You do get to decide that, rather than that of the sad song, “Maybe I’m not cut out for this. This is so hard.” You could instead choose an anthem that’s, “I’m magnificent. I honor myself. I am courageous. I am a problem solver.”

Nicole: Asking yourself the hard questions.

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Leah: Yes, in a loving way. In an honoring way. In a way that honors you and honors the process. Honors that it's your story that you are living on, you're running.

Nicole: And your story is good.

Leah: Your story is good. That is such a good note to end on. Thank you, Nicole.

Nicole: Thank you so much.

Leah: One last thing I want to ask, because I know one thing you do specifically, and I just have this feeling that somewhere, someday out there, someone's going to listen to this podcast, and they will have been looking for you, because I know something that you are extraordinary at is not only being a pacer for people in the races, but being a life pacer.

Also, this aspect of the work you do, where if someone has a bucket list to dream, they want to run an ultra, or do some kind of adventure race, or climb a mountain, or run their first 5K. You help women walk through that journey, it's not just training their body, it is about this holistic work. Can you speak a little bit about that?

Nicole: So, I have trained many people, from 5K up to an ultra-marathon and it's one of the greatest honors to be able to walk next to someone side by side, step by step and remind them that they always have me, with a soft hand on their back saying, "You can take another step."

It's such a gift to be able to do that side by side with women and really transform their lives. Knowing what it looks like to accomplish that thing, and to face their fears and doubts and to overcome them and refine them

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to feeling like they're even more their truer self and finding that true self within them. I'm always up for taking people's biggest challenges on with them. So that they know that they aren't alone and that they can handle it.

Leah: Race pacer. Life pacer.

Nicole: Life pacer. Business pacer. Dream pacer.

Leah: Thank you so much, Nicole.

Nicole: Thank you.

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I hope you enjoyed that conversation with Nicole. I loved it. Now, this brings me to the part of the podcast where I want you to do more than just listen, I want you to really lean in and work with me, coach with me. As I mentioned in the opening, this is an amazing time to reexamine, to rethink things, to decide what is your priority.

The word priority comes from the Latin, a priori, which meant a priority. It was always meant to be "a." And I think all the theme of essentialism is forcing us to reconsider that again.

I know that for myself, I have always had a difficult time narrowing down priorities, thinking of things as a priority. And everything that has been stripped in the last couple weeks has really allowed me to see what I want to still hold and what still is essential to me.

So that's number one, give yourself the time, the space to do that. Maybe do it with a deep-hearted, deep-thinking, compassionate friend. Journal

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about it. Find a coach. Join my free Facebook group. Come to my free class. Join the Art School immersion. But don't miss this invitation. This much a grand invitation.

And second, if you've defined those things that are essential to you. That as Nicole said, "You really do want to honor and you don't want to give up on", then what can you do in this time be a creative problem solver? To figure out maybe it's the next 5-mile chunks. Maybe it's the very next step.

Turn your mind towards opportunity and problem solving. Especially now, when I keep hearing people say, and they haven't really thought it through, "Well I can't really do this now and I can't do this now. I can't do this now."

Even as an exercise of the imagination, give yourself 15 minutes where you direct your mind and imagination to come up with nothing but answers. If you had to do this, if you had to stay the course, if you had to thrive, if you had to continue to move forward with your dream, how would you do it? And as always, I know one of the answers has to be, "Love hard on yourself, all the way through, right through that finish line."

Thank you for listening to another episode of The Art School Podcast. If you've enjoyed this episode, the best thing you can do to pay it forward is to share, subscribe, and then to go to iTunes and leave a review.

This podcast is a labor of love from me, so I so appreciate any way you can share it, any way you can get the word out, and I so appreciate your reviews. I think this is one more way we have of demonstrating many things can be contagious, a negative mindset, a virus.

But, so can light. And I want to offering here is, I want to offer so many contagions of light and empowerment and possibility thought this time. So,

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any way you can help me do that, thank you so much for being a part of the community and for being the light, spreading the light, sharing the light.

And when you're ready to take this work deeper, and I don't think there is a better time than now, and I've really tries to make it as easy as possible for anyone who's ever been on the fence, to say yes to themselves and yes to their dreams, and yes to their thriving, and yes to possibility; yes to potential.

If you want to learn how to honor yourself, be all in on what you're capable of, all in on your dream and learn what your hard rule is going to be for not quitting. Then I would love to help you do that, whether you want to join for the free group coaching call or you want to join in the immersive four-week experience or you want to be on the waiting list for private coaching, or the waiting list for The Art School in the fall 2020.

The best way to find out about these things and to say in the loop, is to go to my website, www.leahcb.com and sign up for my newsletter. If you have any other questions you, can also send us an email at support@leahcb.com and we will take care of you.

The closing reflection I have for you today is this; I just loved how Nicole said, "Your story is good." Especially, the way it followed on the heels of the story of great vulnerability, and how we often try to shield ourselves from people seeing us in our most organic, vulnerable, human state. And now though, what is so clear we have in common, what is connecting us, is our vulnerability. And I know that can feel terrifying, and yet I also hope that stories like Nicole's help you see the beauty and the strength in your vulnerability. So, just remember whatever your story is, wherever you are along your trail, your story is good, and you are magnificent.

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You all really are. Thank you so much for being here. Thanks for everyone who's been reaching out. I love you. I hope you are well, be well, stay safe and I will talk to you next week.