

Ep #79: How to Astonish Yourself



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Leah Badertscher

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“Deep within man dwell those slumbering powers; powers that would astonish him, that he never dreamed of possessing, forces that would revolutionize his life if aroused and put into action,” Orison Swett Marden. I want to talk about some astonishing things with you on today’s podcast. So, listen in and prepare to astonish yourself.

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 Art School friends. And welcome back. And welcome those who are now to Art School. So, I’ve always loved people about whom it’s said they never met a stranger. And so, I hope when you find this podcast, it resonates with you and you are a stranger but for a moment, and never again.

It has been a full week here. This is one of those weeks that make me think, “Wow, that was a long year.” And a lot of good things happened. And there was a lot of unexpected things, including on Tuesday. I pride myself – and maybe this is why it happened – on never canceling.

I can count on one hand the number of times in the last decade that I have run my own business that I have canceled anything, including when I was still teaching yoga and Pilates back in the day when I was pregnant. I taught right up until the very last day. It was good for me, kept my mind of being sick the entire time, and I loved seeing my clients.

But anyway, for sure, with coaching clients, I just honor my commitments. That’s really important to me. And I think it’s also been one of those things where I’ve recognized, at different stages, ironically, it’s held me back

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because I've thought, "Oh my gosh, what if I let people down?" That's always been my work. What if I disappoint somebody?

Which, of course, if you follow this coaching work, you know the mind work that I do then there because whether or not they're disappointed, that's their business and not my business. I cannot manipulate myself or the world in order to ensure that people are not disappointed, which is really about me not wanting to feel the feelings that I would feel when I think that thoughts that I think when somebody else experiences disappointment.

But case in point, and why I bring this up, on Tuesday one of our pets – we have this Izzy kitty that we adore, we adopted from my parent's farm last Thanksgiving. And she has just an awesome personality. She's so smart. She's so spunky and she is so tolerable of the way the kids love on her and carry her around and haul her around.

My daughter Blaize will put her in a backpack and take her for walks out around the farm. The kids will build her – they call it the Kitty Yacht. They have built her boxes, like a yacht, a Kitty Yacht, out of boxes that they have taped together and cut portholes out of and decorated. And then they tie string to it and pull it around the house and she just rides in there looking out of her little kitty porthole. And she seems to love it.

But anyway, Tuesday morning, we woke up and Izzy was not well. And so, we made a vet appointment for a couple of days later. They said, "Just watch her." And then, the morning progressed and she quickly progressively got worse and worse. And then, at one point, she was violently shaking and I thought, "Oh my goodness, it looks like..." we had this happen to another pet cat in the past and that was a stroke. And I thought for sure we are going to have to put this cat to sleep today.

So, I was so upset, calling around trying to find a vet opening. And because of the current COVID situation, a lot of them have very restricted

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hours and staff and nobody could take her. And we did find somewhere eventually, further away from here. But in the meantime, I cancelled all of my calls and I had Art School class for that day, because it just so happened my husband was out far away picking up some building materials for a house because no one else could deliver them, and I had three crying kids on my hands. I was crying.

And then all of this, come to find out, like, so relieved, the cat was constipated. I thought she was a goner. And she really just was extremely backed up. And apparently, they can react like this when that happens. Who'd have thunk?

So, anyway, that meant that all of those calls and everything that I had scheduled for Tuesday – and my Tuesdays are pretty stacked right now as I try to be efficient and work around homeschooling on the other days. But anyway, so grateful that that day ended on a much better note. And meanwhile, I have the most amazing clients. They were very understanding. The kids are super-happy that the cat is still alive.

And in the midst of all this too, some other awesome things like I finished a commission, an intuitive painting commission I've been working on for a really amazing woman and her company. And I was so honored to be asked to do this project because I just think the world of her and the work that she and her team are doing. So, that felt wonderful to finish that and share that with her.

The Art School has been beyond beyond. So, so you do not just think it's just me saying this, I just cut some threads from messages I've received or threads from our Facebook group to share with you other people's words. So, here was one that was just posted today "I'm so sad this Art School Immersion is going to be over. I have loved it so much."

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Another woman wrote, “Through this experience, I have felt more centered, less harried. In short, I have felt more myself, less everything else.” I am wild about that. I’m so about that. Someone else sent me a message, “Boom, \$900 in art sales today.” And then later, they wrote and said, “two more pieces SOLD!”

Another woman wrote, “I was sketching and looked up to see the big pile of laundry unfolded in the basket on the floor. I caught myself thinking, “Next week, the immersion will be over and I can take this extra hour to catch up on all my chores. And I stopped myself with a solid no! This is my time and I am going to keep it. I have also started better communicating my boundaries. It’s been like having a sous chef in the kitchen. They can’t help you or get out of the way if they don’t know where you’re going with that boiling pot of water.”

I so loved that because that brings all of this work down into the day to day, into the very pragmatic, which is where you begin to shift the needle. It’s where you begin – that’s where all transformation really gets traction.

Another woman wrote, “Oh my gosh, what an inspiring and practical breakthrough session, Leah.” That was in response to today’s class, which feels like a week ago. But it was amazing.

If I were not also coaching people on these calls – and obviously they are showing up being very vulnerable. They have paid to be there – I would love to be able to share with you what happens on these calls because I don’t think I can do justice to it describing it. You have to be there. It’s a little surreal for me even to think that this is my life and this is the work that I get to do with people.

So, I hope you will sign up for Art School in the future and experience it for yourself. I can’t oversell it. it’s really extraordinary. I’ve been a part of so many different coaching experiences and I am very proud and also very

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humbled that there is something extraordinary, phenomenal, very special, and very different going on in this community and with the group of people that are attracted to this work. And so, if it's been calling to you, say yes. And I'm not saying this out of FOMO or trying to induce FOMO, but just do this for yourself.

Someone else wrote, "Oh my gosh, this has been amazing. Thank you, thank you." Someone else, "This has been unbelievable. I feel so fortunate to have found this powerful corner of the world. And I also feel like a genius, like a super-smart early-adopter, like I found something before the world finds out about how good it is and it becomes famous and crowded. This has been so what I needed and I know it's just a matter of time before you're full to the world's knocking on your door. So, I'm so grateful I got to work with you personally and in this intimate group environment."

Another woman wrote, "Every time I work with you, I expect magic. I expect it to be good. And still also, the skeptic in me thinks, we've probably peaked. What else can there be to discover? How is she possibly going to raise the bar and continue to exceed expectations? BUT YOU DO. It's like what I used to think was your amazing coaching is still so amazing. And yet, I can see now that that was just scratching the surface of what you're capable of. And get the sense you still have so much left to share. Whatever it is, I want to be there."

Another woman wrote – this was after I shared – I have this imagery, this class I teach around a dam image. So, I think I need to do a more full podcast episode on the dam image. But she wrote, "I'm still being blown away by the dam image. What a mind-shifting idea. Thank you."

Another woman wrote in response too – I have been writing so much, by the way, in this forum, coaching like mad. I have for sure been coaching faces off, asses off, everything. It reminds me of the Monty Python movie where the guy is like, "Come back here and I will bite your nose off." Coaching

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everything off and posting in there. And I went to maybe try to do a tally of how many posts I've written and how much coaching I've done in there and I lost count.

In four weeks, we are up over 1000 posts because I promised everybody a mind-blowing immersion experience and for sure one thing I always do is overdeliver. And so, I wanted everyone to feel like, "Wow, I hit the jackpot. Yay me. This was one of the best investments ever." So, underneath one of the posts I wrote, someone wrote, "Thank you for such wonderfully supportive, and at the same time wonderfully challenging advice."

Another woman posted, on the topic of worthiness, "Leah, your podcast..." I'm putting number two on this, "Have been so meaningful to me. And now, my absolute favorite, beyond master-level experience of this topic is the coaching you did on the free call in the general Art School group on April 1st. the whole call is amazing. But this specific worthiness topic starts around minute 50. I've relistened, pausing to basically transcribe it word for word. For me, you reach the mind's intellectual objections as well as create the physical and heartfelt experience of wholeness itself. And then you keep digging for objections and deal with them all summarily. It's universe-class coaching on what for me has been the trickiest topic. Further gold where I've relistened and paused to take exact notes in the last few minutes after this worthiness discussion. Leah tells us her intentions for Art School. Holy wow. No wonder miracles are happening. Thank you, Leah and everyone. The group energy affects me so far beyond any reasonable explanation."

So, I wanted to share those with you not only so you could hear about the kind of work we're doing, people's experience of the work that we are doing in the Art School, but also because it's a good segue into today's topic of astonishment.

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And just like the quote that I used to open this episode, “Deep within man dwell those slumbering powers; powers that would astonish him, that he would he would never have dreamed of possessing, forces that would revolutionize his life if aroused and put into action.” That quote resonates with me so deeply.

I don't know why, but my whole life, I have been fascinated by potential. I have wanted to understand people and to deeply know them. And I've always felt that there are aspects of us that we keep locked up. And it's intrigued me.

And I think one way I would describe what coaching is to me is that humans are astonishing. They are so astonishing. And I think we have a desire to astonish ourselves, to know and discover that which in ourselves would astonish us. And I think, as people, we have this desire. We and our dreams have this desire to be known and to be seen and to be understood, and for our dreams, for this part of us that we keep locked inside, for that to become real and known in the world, for that to become our reality.

And I happen to have a desire to see and to know and to understand and to help become real. And so, all of this, this fascination with potential, this knowing that for all of the amazing things that we've created so far, that there is still more. And I think too, to have this experience of getting to experience what it is to truly be you in this lifetime, that's about honoring you and honoring your life, and honoring the preciousness and the gift it is to be here.

It's not about doing something from, “I need to prove,” or from striving or from the need to force or prove your superiority over others or dominate others. That's not it at all. To me, it's about this deep honoring. And if there is something in you that you still feel there's more of you to know, there's still more of you to be discovered and you would also like the experience of

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just being yourself in the world without this overlay of second guessing and the constant overlay of that.

If you've just the desire to know yourself, like what life would be like without that, to me, it's astonishing that we have that knowing and that we should honor that. And so, along these lines in the Art School this morning, I had a post, a theme about, a little mini-class about cultivating the practice of astonishing yourself.

And so, this is one of many similar posts that I shared throughout this immersion and I wanted to share this particular one with all of you. I wrote, "Good morning, Art School. I want for all of you to be able to live and create in ways that astonish you, or substitute any word that resonates most for you. By astonishing yourself, I mean you are both filled with wonder, awe, and gratitude for what you have been able to create, and at the same time, when you do, a part of you also knows you had it in you all along.

The way we are traditionally conditioned to do this is by thinking we need to muscle, force our way there. There is a lot of massive action required. But if you're muscling, forcing, you are for sure working against an internal and optional resistance; a thought obstacle that you haven't uncovered or released yet. Working to bring that thought obstacle to the surface and release is powerful and available to you. Another way of approaching, in addition, is to strengthen your muscle of astonishment, to grow your capacity for astonishment, which to me also lies in the same realm as cultivating your capacity for gratitude, awe, wonder, appreciation, love, belief, and trust.

A part of this process is learning where you reflexively are dismissive of yourself, dismissive of your innate magnificent being, your gifts, your journey, your work, your failures, your triumphs, your achievements, your calling. It is hard to make progress and rise if you are continually letting the

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air out of your own balloon or don't fix this gaping hole in your energetic tank.

If you are currently experiencing a deficit in your life, for example under-earning, creating a lot and offering a lot, but getting far less in results or traction, this is a place to look. Then there is also the proactive piece where you make it a practice to acknowledge and honor the astonishing things that you have done. The more you practice truly appreciating what you have created, who you are, the more you will feel this internal wind at your back, like you are unstoppable and capable of anything you set your mind to when it comes to what you want to create in the future.

This is not easy because this is not what we are conditioned to do. And our brain also has that negativity bias that we must be aware of. But it is so worth it. You do not want the automatic negativity bias in conjunction with confirmation bias, which is what the brain things it seeks to prove, which is what the brain thinks, it also then seeks to prove is true. You don't want those two things; negativity bias and confirmation bias running and limiting our life.

The practice of cultivating astonishment definitely supports this creative intentional powerful model and creative way of being. So, I want to invite you to begin that practice for yourself on the regular, intensely, like you mean it, like your dreams, whatever you want to put in your result line. Depend on it like your mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, relational wellbeing depends on it because they do.”

So, in response to what I wrote there, then – you know, one of the best things about this group coaching are the brilliant minds that are in there too and the ways they take this and think about it and come back with responses that inform and uplift the whole group.

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So, one woman wrote in response, “I like that you say not only, quote unquote, create in a way that astonishes yourself, but more importantly perhaps is to live in a way that astonishes yourself, to live in that way that is the way of being you. When you do that, the sky is the limit. And I believe it is then possible for us to do anything that is within the dreamscape, even if it involves challenge and the unknown.”

And I love that this particular woman wrote dreamscape because she is a hard-hitting high-achieving MD and you have to know her personality, but if you're listening, you know who you are, I love that the word dreamscape showed up in your post. Like you mentioned, she's also uber-creative. And we've won her over.

And she continues to write, “Nowhere in the habit of astonishing one's self do I see a place for hesitance. That last line in particular just slayed me because, so spot on, “Nowhere in the habit of astonishing one's self do I see a place for hesitance.”

That came up then on our group coaching call today because another woman was struck by it too and said she realized how much her hesitancy had been a way of holding back her potential and that that hesitant energy is both you're kind of going for it, you're believing in it, and at the same time, you're hedging your bets with second doubt. It is just not allowing yourself and what you have within you to go and flow and not allowing yourself to go for it. And then that shows up then in our result line in a dream, in a goal that is not – you know you're proud of it, and also it's left wanting something. And that wanting, it is so empowering to know that that's a result of hesitancy because you can change that. And you can choose differently.

And I think something that comes up a lot with the client population I have – because I mentioned I do have a few doctors in my client population, and most are in the arts, in creative industries. And I don't think you have to be

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in the arts, the creative industries to have this phenomenon, but it does seem to be a phenomenon that occurs a lot in these industries. And that is living within this permission-based paradigm where you're conditioned to think you have to be chosen, you have to get lucky.

And I am all about disrupting that. That is some of the deepest and the most rigorous work we do. That is some high-level coaching and that is something I'm so ready to disrupt and eradicate and create – because that permission-based paradigm is not going to fly in the thriving artist paradigm. And it does require some mind ninja work, but you can get there.

You have to shift from thinking you have to earn something in order to be chosen, in order to be admitted and instead you put yourself in the position of you choose you and then you choose what you create. That is a concept that I think, for many, may fall on deaf ears. And for others of you, your ears are going to prick up and you're going to be like, "Wait, what did she just say? I think I get what she just said."

And others of you will be like, "That's ridiculous. I don't get it at all." And then you'll think about it for a couple of years and then it will dawn on you, "Now I get what she was talking about." So, don't dismiss it too soon is all I'm saying. Think about this. What would it be like if you let yourself from under a permission-based paradigm and you really believed that you chose your destiny, you chose your creative destiny, you chose your career opportunities, you chose your income level, all of it?

I want to do a whole other episode, years' worth of episodes on this topic. The hardest thing for me about this podcast is deciding what to talk about every week because I look back through client calls, through emails, through my notes and writing, and I for sure could do nothing else but put out a podcast every day. And my producers, Pavel and Angela would probably get really tired of me.

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But this is one area, for sure, that I want to continue to dive into with this community, this listening community at large. Because it is a total gamechanger. And if you are ready to run with it and embrace it, no one's going to be able to stop you. You're going to put yourself on the map and in a league of your own, guaranteed.

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, implement it in your life and let it be transformational.

So, what I want to share with you today are three questions that I shared with the Art School Immersion group this morning. One, what are some things that you have done that are astonishing? Because remember, this is all about practicing cultivating that muscle of astonishment. The more you are in the energy of astonishment, the more you're going to attract more astonishing things within yourself, the more you are going to call them up, the more you are going to awaken those slumbering powers within you that will astonish you and revolutionize your life.

The second question, what are some ways you think that are astonishing? So, let me just rephrase that so you understand. It's kind of an awkwardly worded question. But what I am asking there is for you to reflect and notice that the ideas that occur to you, the dreams, the way your mind works, for you to be astonished by that, for you to think that it's noteworthy for you to listen to everything going on in your mind as if everything has a god seed within it. So, what are some of the ways that you think that are astonishing? And last, what beautiful astonishing way of being are you cultivating?

Thank you for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you've enjoyed this podcast, the best thing you can do to pay it forward is to share, is to subscribe, and then also I would love it and so greatly

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appreciate, if you haven't already, please let this be the time you do, don't put it off any longer, don't hesitate, go to iTunes and leave a review.

That helps me reach more people with this work. It also helps me to connect with you. I have really loved – I've had the opportunity to speak recently with a lot of new people that have been listening for quite a while, and it's pretty surreal to then have a conversation with someone who's been listening to me for a year or longer now.

And I know people are listening because I see all the downloads. And yet, to see them on the screen and hear about someone out there in the world every week, taking a walk, or listening to me in their studio and to have them say that it's life-changing, that is amazing. And so, I don't get to talk with each and every one of you, but when I read your reviews on iTunes, that sure does make the human connection all the more real and I am really grateful for it, really grateful to know you're out there listening and I so appreciate hearing what your experience of this podcast is like.

When you're ready to take this work deeper, there are a few ways you can do that. I currently have a waitlist for private coaching, but if you're interested in that, you can email support@leahcb.com with discovery consult in the subject line. And we will take care of you.

We have also opened enrolment for the Art School fall 2020. The third option, which I'm very excited about, is the Art School Mastermind which will kick off this summer. It will also include enrolment in the fall 2020 Art School. More details will be coming on that shortly. But you can, in the meantime, stay tuned and keep up to date by going to my website, www.leahcb.com and signing up for my newsletter.

In closing, here's what I wanted to leave you to contemplate when you have your deep-thinking time, when you have your journaling time. And that is to think about what it means to be astonished by yourself, astonished

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with life, and how is it that we're not walking around astonished the entire time and allowing more of that into your life, allowing an appreciation for how astonishing your beingness is already, not only because you deserve that.

You deserve to experience the light, the darkness, the everything that is you in this life and to be astonished by that. And then also too, because it has the effect that once you're awake to that, once you're awake to the energy of astonishment and once you expand that muscle for experiencing it, expand your capacity for experiencing it, you're able to allow so many more experiences into your life that astonish you, you are able to deepen your appreciation for the astonishing things that you have already done.

And too, it does absolutely awaken those slumbering powers within you that have been waiting all along to rise, astonish you, and revolutionize your life. Have a beautiful week, everyone, and I will talk to you next time.