

Ep #89: Bringing Your Imagination into Focus



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“You can’t depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus,” Mark Twain. This episode is the second part of a workshop that I offered to The Art School enrollees and to my mastermind clients. So, while The Art School and the mastermind don’t start until August and September, I’ve been offering a summer workshop series to help those clients bridge the gap and start building momentum.

So, this workshop was entitled The Art, Play Freedom, and Abundance of Mental Discipline and Creative Visualization. Be sure to go back and listen to episode 88, if you haven’t already, to get the first part of this workshop. And then, join us again here as we dive into specific tools and techniques that will help you build the life of your dreams.

You are listening to *The Art School Podcast*, a show for artists and creatives who want to become the next greatest version of themselves. Learn how to cultivate an extraordinary way of being and take the mystery out of making money, and the struggle out of making art. Here is your host, master certified life coach, artist, and former lawyer, Leah Badertscher.

Welcome back, everyone. As you can tell, my audio is a little different this week. I took a few days and took my children back to Iowa to our family farm to visit my parents. It was the first time we have seen them since COVID. So, that was amazing.

And then, I came back and left the kids there for a few more days to have grandma and grandpa time at farm camp, and realized that the computer that I usually use to record these podcasts is in Iowa still with my son, who has started a podcast of his own, which is awesome. But I didn’t realize until I came back here that he has that computer. And so, my apologies for the audio quality this week, but I hope the content of this workshop makes up for it.

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A few notes before I just let you dive into that. As I mentioned in episode 88, the first part of the workshop, the best way to use these episodes is to listen all the way through, go back, listen a second time – you can speed it up – but have your notebook and journal handy so that you can stop it at certain times, you can take notes, you can answer the questions that I pose.

In this episode, you can try out some of the exercises and make notes for things that you want to think about and try later. And then, read your notes again, review them after 24 hours. Research shows that we forget 80% of what we learn. And this is an antidote to that.

The other thing that I want you to do is to choose something that you visualize yourself doing and, as best you can, implement that immediately. Not only see yourself doing it, but act in alignment with that future-self within 24 hours if you can, two to three days at most. That is going to put the stake in the ground, signal to you and the universe that you are serious, and get the ball rolling and start creating momentum like you have not known before. So, without further ado, I'll let you dive into the second half of this workshop.

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So, feeling into, like, the energy of that way of being that I want to embody and walking as her. Because there's something different. I do it, like, in seated meditation too, sitting there until I click into it, and until I can hold it for longer and longer and longer, the feeling. I'll let myself be led by the vision. Why that arbitrary number? What's so awesome about, like 50K-a-month earner on the regular?

And again, it comes back to, it's a breadcrumb that leads me to what it is to live in this one life you have and love it, love what you have to offer, trust what you have to offer, love the process, including the learning, including

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the painful points. Love that you can know that you're a lifelong learner, and even take the painful points and then reflect and then use it to evolve and grow, use it to grow in wisdom and in truth of who you really are.

So, one from Joe Dispenza that I wanted to share, as he calls it, jumping boxes. And this is my take on this. So, to visualize it as the results, the reality that you're currently in is one box. And that box is created, that reality, that paradigm was created by mindset. It's like your belief systems, what you subscribe to built that box. It feels a certain way in that box.

Then, imagine that there are an infinite number of other possibilities and boxes out there. And there is one in particular that you're like, "Oh, that one. That one, I would love to jump into and experience." And don't go to the place of, "But how am I going to do that?" Because any time your brain tries to answer, "How am I going to do that?" it answers that question by referencing your current box.

It tries to answer that question by referencing your past. But if what you want to create is something you've never created before, you can't reference your past. This is why I like the imagery of just jumping to a different box, because it makes this logic leap a logical thing, of like, "No, there's no linear rational thing, how about this?"

Whatever how you can imagine is going to be too small for what actually happens. It's thinking about your why, like why is it so important to you to live inside that box? And what is so amazing about it there? How is that going to feel? And to get really clear about that why that, again, for me it was something so life-giving about the freedom and the trust, when I think about a creative genius box.

Like, what would we like to flow like that? What is possible for humans? I just feel like we're on this threshold of tapping into so much more and it's so exhilarating, so much more exciting. And you can see certain people

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doing it. And part of the thing that's hard to learn from is, when we want to learn from them rationally, they don't give us rational answers. And so now, that's why I like the work of Joe Dispenza is because it seems like there's a mystical thing that goes on, and maybe there is, but he's using science to try to use scientific language to explain the mystical.

So, thinking about that other box, another way I like to think about it is then imagine that that box is like a room, and there's a certain energy to that reality, to that future self, to that true self, and there's a key to get into that room. And it's not like you're a good person, you're a bad person. There's a certain energetic key that allows you. And it's got to be a match.

And so, for instance, if that energetic room, like I had this feeling of, like sitting in the back of a Chevy Malibu and I'm like, who I want to be is not feeling sorry for herself. You're like, "I don't know what to do here, how to change this." She's not having a pity party. That's not the vibration that is the key that allows entry into that box.

To be in that box, you have to be consistent. You have to be a match with that energy. So, how can I change my energy? And this is a good variation on that question of how do you accept? How do you believe? Another way of approaching it is to be like, "What's the different kind of energy of that level of belief? What's a different kind of energy of that level of belief?"

I love listening to interviews with, obviously, any great artist. And what I find so interesting is their approach to drafts versus, like, talking or interviewing somebody who has never yet completed a draft. And the person who is published and done many drafts has a very different thought process.

So, what if you go to the box of somebody who is published and allow yourself their thoughts about book one? Because some of them wrote three books. And now what do they say is, "Gosh, I wish I would have been a lot easier on myself. I would have cut down on all that suffering that was

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unnecessary, if I knew that what was inevitable was, I'm doing what I love to do, I don't read reviews anymore. I just have a much more balanced take on it." Like, what are the thoughts that they're allowing themselves, but also the places where they just don't go? And what is the energy of that?

So, I keep trying to mention many different angles because I know people are different learners. Some of you are, like, go in more through the thought line. Some of you it's emotive, feeling. Some of you, it's like, even more than feeling. It's like an energetic kind of learning. Some of you just need to, like, do to figure it out, and some of you need to think about it a lot in advance.

Then the next one I wanted to tell you about was the Silva method. Has anyone ever heard about the Silva method? Like, the mind control Silva method. So, that's the part that a lot of people are like, "Mind control, I'm out." But if you keep an open mind, there's some actually very fascinating approaches. And this is another one that, for some people, it doesn't work because they're not as visual. It doesn't work as well as approaching it through the feeling, using the feeling as your compass.

But if you are very visual – and even there's aspects of this that you can modify and adapt if you are more of a feeling person. What you begin with is picture a screen, like one of those old fashioned – you can picture a movie screen, a TV screen. You can picture one of those 1960s, 70s, 80s movie reel family movie screens that you pull down.

And then, picture it six feet in front of you. And then, from there, six feet in front of you, you want to move it up to – you keep looking, your face is straight ahead, but in your mind's eye, the screen moves up, like, 15 to 20 degrees. So, you do this first with your mind open.

The part about your eyes moving up, they now show that this is about accessing different brain waves. When your eyes can move up like this,

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from brain scans, they show you have an easier time moving into an alpha state, which then precedes the theta and deeper brain wave states, moving your eyes back in your head.

There are hypnotherapists that do this too. Marisa Peer is, like, a famous hypnotherapist that lives in the UK. And I took a course from here. And when I was in London, I even ponied up for, like, I went to her house for a three-hour session with her, which was fascinating. But she too has you do, as part of this, you roll your eyes back up towards your eyebrows and, because again, it changes your brain state.

And so, there is this whole other aspect of this. I'm talking about it like ways of being, feeling states. And whether you're into the biofeedback or not, I do think, I guess, there's a way you can do it, if you wanted to get really scientific and invest a lot of money in knowing what brain state you're in. But when I'm saying things like walk and swim, meditate until you shift, it's because you can feel it. And that, to me, is like a shifted brain state.

You have an altered level of consciousness at which you're operating at and you can feel it. And then, once you open that doorway, you can go back there. So, you could do this with biofeedback, like, if you preferred technology and things like that to say, "I'm there. I'm there."

And you can also do it, like the home version, of feel differently and know that that's significant. And then something else I will do is I'll imagine I've looked at so many pictures of brain scans and what's going on at alpha, at beta, at alpha, at theta, at delta, at gamma, like what do I feel like is going on in my mind right now and in my body?

That's part of the practice of it, is trusting yourself to calibrate that, not just like a cool party trick, but that is able to bring yourself back to a homeostatic state, no matter what's going on in your world, to have more control over that.

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So, I did mindfulness meditation for years and I loved that. And I just feel like there's so much more though that we don't teach as aggressively because it sounds kind of freaky and woo-woo. But the fortunate thing is there is so much more science now backing it up.

Going back to the Silva method, have your eyes look up because that helps you access a different brain state. So, you practice at first with your eyes open so you know what that feels like. But then you close your eyes and you see that screen six feet in front of you. You keep your face straight ahead but you lift your eyes 15 to 20 degrees.

And the first thing I'm going to say is, like, when I snap my fingers, you picture an orange. So, close your eyes. Look at that movie screen. Shift it up 15 degrees, six feet ahead of you, and you're going to see an orange on the screen. And then, when I snap my fingers again, you'll see an apple. And when I snap my fingers again, you'll see the face of somebody you cherish. And hold that face on that screen and then feel, not only see them, but now feel an emotion towards them. Send them love. Send that image love.

Okay, and now open your eyes. And could everybody do that? So, you start with something simple and you're like, "Oh, I could do that." And then you work your way up. And then, the next part, there's then a three-stage method. And this is the part where so many different teachings align. It's like going back to nothing changes until you have a very charged emotional shift, an energetic shift or experience.

Because we all know, sometimes, we don't change until something becomes so painful that we have to change. And I think it is okay to, like, if you have some painful experience and you're, like, sitting in the back of the Chevy, that was painful. But then to not be victimized by that, but instead to use that as impetus to change.

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So, the next part of that Silva three-step method would be for one minute, you would visualize a current situation on that screen that represents something in your life right now you want to change. So, let's go through that.

So, we just write down quickly, what is the specific scenario in your life that you want to change? And then, when you would practice this method on your own, you would see, like, a one-minute movie on your screen of that happening. And at the same time though, you want to turn the dial up on how painful that is.

So, if you're currently like, "I don't know, it's okay that my kids interrupt me every five minutes and want me to break up a fight. It's okay," no. And you, like, dial it up, and I don't like how I react to them when they do that. And I don't like how this is creating, like, not the home life I want to have and how it's impacting my work and whatever. Like, you turn the dial up for the first part of this three-part series.

Then after like a minute of feeling that and associating with the picture, then you slide that screen over to the left 15 degrees. And then the second screen, you see another movie and it's of you doing something proactive to change the situation, even if you don't know exactly what to do yet.

You see yourself, you see the situation changing on the screen and it's like, I'm not in victim mode, I'm doing something to improve it. And you feel that energy of, like, agency and empowerment, which feels better than the pain of, "I don't know what to do here and it's killing me." So, you watch that second movie for like a minute. And then, you slide that one over.

So, the first movie is not over 30 degrees. The second movie is over 15 degrees. And then the third movie that you watch is the one of, like, an ideal scenario. And you want to feel the ideal emotional state. And it might be, like, a scenario, again, don't let your mind get bogged down with, "I

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can't figure out how that's ever going to happen. That's so different than anything I've ever experienced before. It feels like too much of a stretch."

You don't go there. You just go to the vision of the ideal and you go to the feeling state of the ideal and you turn that up and you love that movie. And here's another important part. Again, most powerful, if you see not only you benefitting from this ideal movie, but you see any others benefitting.

You let your mind ruminate in a good way about how this ideal scenario, it's good for you, but gosh, it's good for your friends, it's good for your family, it's good for people who don't even know you yet. It's good in ways you can't even imagine, but you see the effects of this ideal movie screen rippling out and being so much bigger than you. So, again, like tapping into something bigger than yourself with that third one, and letting yourself back in that energy.

And that, again, is one that you practice. And I think people, again, will try this and then they're like, "Didn't work. Feels awkward to me, forced." But the more you do it, the better you get at this. And it should be something that you want to more clearly be able to walk into the movie so that it feels real.

Betsy sent me – I'll look for it – a really great Kobe Bryant quote that came up when he passed away about, when he won championships, he wasn't surprised because he had rehearsed that so many times in his mind. He was like, "Of course, it happened as I knew it would happen." And I think athletes are really good ones to study on this because they will rehearse the tedious details.

And that was something, when I was doing, like, ironman triathlons competitively, half-ironman, or Olympic-distance ones, I broke down every single part that was giving me problems, especially the swim. And right down to the detail of, like, I hated putting on a swim cap, until, like imaging

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myself, what could be a way that I love putting on the swim cap? Because I knew I'd be a much stronger athlete and a much stronger swimmer if I could learn to love to swim.

So, I dissected every part of what I used to hate about swimming until I became a person that could not wait to swim. Because a person that can't wait to swim is in the pool a lot. And a person that is in the pool a lot and wants to get better at swimming becomes a better swimmer. And I don't compete anymore, but I truly love to swim. But then I use that for other areas. I would slow my brain down and dissect, what part of this am I resisting and how instead can I envision loving it?

So, that is the Silva method, and that is one that you practice and you rehearse and you do a mental rehearsal. And a common pushback is, like, that takes time. But the thing is, our brains go, in their lazy ways, daydreaming places to, like, bad neighborhoods all the time, and daydreaming negative outcomes or worrying. That's basically a daydream.

So, this is taking your awareness back, taking your agency back, and directing it instead in a constructive area. Because your brain's going to think 65,000 to 70,000 thoughts a day. If you just reclaimed a part of that traffic every day, deliberately, that you're already thinking it.

So then, the last one, which is the one that has worked really well for me and one that I made up, is to start with the vision of who you want to be and have done the excavating work of why. What does that allow you? What does that give you? And then to get clear, not just intellectually, but in your body of, "Who do I get to be? What does that feel like?" It feels very heart-centered and it feels like there's vibrations coming off of me that come from my heart. And I feel less in my head and just more clear and centered.

It feels differently in my head. I do think, like, different brain states feel differently. And I get into that place where I am so in love with whatever it

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is, like life, that vision I had. And I hold that and practice holding that kind of very powerful energetic state and sustaining it. And then, bringing in some of circumstance, a current circumstance or reality that seems, like, difficult for me, that seems like I'm trying to figure out, that seems like a problem. And I will play with bringing that into my awareness without letting it disrupt, like, the dominant energy.

One place where this worked – and you also do it from, like, you're not trying to change an outcome because to change an outcome would mean you have a problem with the outcome, which then disrupts the energy. So, I was doing this earlier on in our build process. Something happened and I had made a mistake in the downstairs that completely changed how I had designed the downstairs.

And I designed the downstairs so you had certain sightlines. I had designed the house around the property and views, and especially when I come in the house. So, you'd see this beautiful view out the back. Well, there'd be a big post right in the center, a big ugly post right in the center. I'm like, "No, this completely changes everything, from every angle."

And then every time that I go in my house now, I'm going to see that post and be like, "God damnit, that is not what the drawing says. That is not what you were supposed to do. But they had done it, and they were like, "Well, now to change it, it's going to be \$8000. And this was already when things were, like, ticking up and my husband was like..."

And I was like, this is not where I want to be with this process. So, I was doing a morning meditation about everything I just told you, like what do I want in that future home? What do I want to feel like? What was the purpose of designing it that way, with the views? And what does that feel like? And very inconsistent with what I'm currently feeling.

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So, I'm like, I'm going to practice here. This is what I want my dominant experience to be. Post or no post, the whole point of having that view was to give me this dominant experience of beauty and I love this home and it's just to dwell in that. So, I did that. And then you see if you can hold it longer and amplify it up.

And when I felt like it was very steady – and Joe Dispenza talks a lot about heart and mind coherence. So, it's like your heart's not only on board but your mind is, like, right there too. And then I just brought in the vision of that post. Like, can I stay in this space and also hold the reality of that post and that it's \$8000? Nobody seems to want to change it now other than me. And can I stay with all of that, without it disrupting this energy?

And so, like, I did that and you feel this wobble. But, like, holding that and saying, like, I want this to be the most dominant energy. Then I went on about my day. And then, later that day, then you know what happens is my husband called and said, "Jim felt bad about this because he knew how important that was to you, so he said that they're going to eat this one, and then they can resell the materials they already used and recoup some cost so that we can split it. We'll end up paying \$1500 and they'll take the rest of it."

And it was, like, without an argument, without any cajoling, without me having to worry about it, like, stomp around or be angry at anybody. I had just done that and felt the pain of the disappointment, but then also gone to what I really wanted and drew it in. and I was like, "Oh my god, that's awesome."

And that's something that I've done with that one over and over again. And on a much bigger level, that's what that whole picture of the tree, the back corner with the tire swing, that's entirely what I was doing. That's entirely what I continue to do with things that haven't happened yet, is like holding that.

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And I think that's the sacred work, is what do you want to be the dominant energy in your life, and cultivating that, coming from that vision, using imagination not as this pretty term or a thing that's relegated to the land of fairytales and children, but think of your imagination as this faculty that, in 50 years, everybody's going to be talking about there'll be methods, there'll be science, it'll be in the schools, there'll be a structure. And right now, it's still like the wild west, uncharted territory. But we don't go there because we're like, "That's child's play. That's crazy town."

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So 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. Don't just listen to this, be entertained, and forget about it. But take it in. Make it your own. And again, act on it. The sooner the better.

If you're wondering what to choose to act upon – and this, by the way, is your coach with me assignment and challenge – you could use the guidance of Hunter S. Thompson, who said, "Anything that gets your blood racing is probably worth doing."

So, I know a lot of people will decide that they're going to do something and they'll make a big list. But if it seems more like busywork to you and less of an emotional risk, it's probably not in that realm that's going to create as much traction and magic as you would like. And I would love to see on social media what you do with this episode, what you were visualizing, and then what you're creating, and what action you're taking in the world. So, you can tag me. I'd love to see. You can hashtag *The Art School Podcast*. So, let's get our imaginations in focus and start flexing those creative muscles.

Thank you for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you've enjoyed this podcast, if these episodes have been useful to you, the

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best thing you can do to pay it forward is to share, is to subscribe, is to go to iTunes and leave a review.

I am so grateful for each and every listener out there and our audience growth. I would love to take the phrase, having something go viral, back and make it into something positive. So, if this content has inspired you and empowered you, let's add more of that energy to the world. Let's make the light, the creativity, the strength, the resilience, the power of putting our imaginations in focus. Let's take that viral.

And all it takes from you is a few shares and also I so appreciate those of you that take the time out of your day to write a review. That means so much to me, and also helps me reach more people with this work.

When you are ready to take this work deeper, there are two options for that. There is The Art School, which is extraordinary, and begins the first week in September 2020. There is also The Art School Mastermind, which is going to blow your mind. It's six months. It's an intensive Art School experience with extraordinary individuals, world-class coaching, and a group of people who are really ready to take their lives to the next level.

That begins the first week of August. To learn more about either, you can go to my website www.leahcb.com and click on the links for either the mastermind or The Art School. Or you can email us at support@leahcb.com and we'll answer all of your questions and take excellent care of you.

For your closing thought today, in conjunction with these practices, these techniques of mental discipline and creative visualization, I wanted to leave you with the inspiring words of Tracee Ellis Ross, "Wisdom means to choose now what will make sense later. I am learning every day to allow the space between where I am and where I want to be to inspire me, and not terrify me."

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So, for all of you, my dear listeners, how can you choose now what will make sense later? What can you choose now that will make sense later? And always keep your promise to yourself to allow that distance between what you are visualizing and where you are, allow it to inspire you. Have a beautiful, inspiring, creative week, everyone. And I look forward to talking to you next time.