

Ep #98: You Are Not Alone



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With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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

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It is impossible, that tight spot you can't seem to get out of, the habit that has a hold on you, the goal that is elusive, the relationship that seems beyond repair, the old heart wound that just won't heal, the dream that makes you wonder if you are truly delusional, the pandemic, racism, economic disaster, violence, climate change, political dumpster fire of a year that 2020 has been.

Getting to the other side of all of these things has something in common. They can seem overwhelmingly, even maddeningly, depressingly impossible. Impossible if you forget the truth of this. And just what this is, is the topic of today's episode. So, listen in, and together, let's get one another to the other side.

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, everyone, to *The Art School Podcast*. How are you? And let's make a deal together, a promise, that we can answer that honestly. If you haven't listened to my episode a few weeks ago about the PIES plus W tool, please do that.

If you are familiar with self-development work, the idea that sometimes we tend to talk about what's wrong with us as a way of bonding over the less common denominator is an actual true phenomenon. So, that's not what I'm talking about here. But I am talking about allowing ourselves to be seen, to be as we are, to come as we are, and to have a real connection, both with ourselves and with one another. And I believe, when we have this

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true connection, we will be stronger for it and more capable of reaching our dreams and expressing that which we are meant to express.

So, in the past week, I have had the range of conversations and space-holding experiences with people. I have talked with people who are very low, who describe it even as being on their knees, on gravel, and having been there for a while. And I have also had conversations with and been witness to people celebrating, like true exuberant celebrations, well-founded celebrations for reaching something they had long been working for.

And then also, there are all those conversations along the spectrum in between. And I think it's probably safe to say that just my limited microcosm experience of a week is probably an accurate representation of the cross section of everyone out there listening. You find yourself at a range of places.

So, for this week's episode, I wanted to offer you something that I hope will be useful, no matter where you find yourself. And if it doesn't resonate today, maybe it's something you tuck into your back pocket and keep for a day when you do need it, when you do find yourself in a place that seems like it's impossible for you to get to the other side.

So, I'm going to get to that in a moment, but I wanted to take a little detour and just say, also, holy smokes, you guys. I am also coming off of a huge weekend with the Art School Mastermind. And I have high expectations for myself and for this group and definitely one of my areas of growth has been to lean even more deeply into trusting myself, which sometimes means trusting that I know the difference between what is mine to control and what is not mine to control, especially if you want to facilitate epic, massively magical experiences for people.

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You cannot plan this kind of stuff out. You cannot control that which wants to happen through us, for us. And it's scary as a business owner, as a coach, to feel responsible to a group of people and to my reputation, and not to mention just the pragmatic side of running a business. It can feel very scary to relinquish that kind of control and surrender. But I also know that, for me, that kind of control and not surrendering is where I limit myself and where I allow myself just a fraction of what not only I have to offer, but of experiencing what life, creativity, have to offer.

So, I leaned into that trust and into that surrender this weekend, showed up to do my part, and also was clear on that which was not my part. And again, holy smokes, I mean, one of the text messages that is representative of some of the other messages I received was – I'll bleep this because sometimes my children listen to these – "Holy bleep, that was bleeping unreal."

So, that was a message post one of our morning sessions. And it just went on and on and on and on like that. Like one of the participants likes to say, it was bananas, man, bananas.

And while there are so many things that I want to share that came through that weekend, breakthroughs, insights, revelations, next growth opportunities, and just pure sheer magical, you cannot make this kind of stuff up experiences, I also want to metabolize the weekend. Because it was pretty epic. And on the other side of that, I will have so much to share with you because it was definitely an experience that seemed divinely designed for the individuals there and also messages that seem like they are meant to be shared far and wide.

So, I'm really looking forward to sharing those things. And in the meantime, we'll come back to the subject of today's episode. So, this episode is

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dedicated to all of you, whenever you find yourself in a place where, all of a sudden, doing an impossible thing, achieving your impossible goal or dream or moonshot seems like it's a bad idea and is never going to happen.

Or maybe you find yourself in a situation that you never wanted in the first place. Maybe you find yourself with a diagnosis or with a relationship that has ended, with a broken heart that wouldn't have been your choosing, or you lost a job you loved or lost a loved one. Maybe you feel like you're in that place where, goddammit, you wish you could just give up because you've been working and working and nothing seems to be working. It seems impossible.

So, this episode is for you during those times. And it's also dedicated to one of you in particular. I have shared before that I love to try to connect with you in my imagination by thinking of you listening to this as you wash dishes or prepare dinner for your family, or maybe you take me out for a run with you or a walk. Maybe you listen on your commute or while you're in your studio.

And I love that. I love imagining that connection and it's such an honor to me too that I do get to be with you, those of you listening, in your lives in that way. And then, someone recently wrote to me and described a way that I hadn't imagined. And it was a gift to hear this and just blew my mind, and also inspired a newsletter that I recently sent out to my community.

So, some of you will have heard these words. But I hope that this isn't redundant, that receiving them via the spoken word is a little bit different. So, this episode is dedicated to Maria. Maria recently took the time – I'm so grateful.

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And she wrote that, “This has been quite a year of learning for me and you have been a significant part of that, even if you didn’t know. When I had treatments on Thursdays, I would always be happier getting to listen to your podcast. It gave me lots to think about, look forward to, and work on as I sat there. So, thanks for joining me and keeping me sane.”

Thank you, Maria. I didn’t know. I didn’t imagine that. And what a gift to know that. And so, now, I wanted to take this opportunity, again, to dedicate this episode to you and to ask everyone that’s listening to send you lots of love and healing as you complete your journey of healing through these treatments and I know, on the other side, that you said you’re looking forward to joining The Art School. And let me just tell you, I am so looking forward to having you there. So, thank you so much for your message and your courage and your creativity and yeah, this one is for you.

It is impossible, that tight spot you can’t seem to get out of. The habit that has a hold on you, the goal that is elusive, the relationship that seems beyond repair, the old heart wound that just won’t heal, the dream that makes you wonder if you are truly delusional, the pandemic, racism, economic disaster, violence, climate change, political dumpster fire of a year that 2020 has been, getting to the other side of all of these things has something in common.

They can seem overwhelmingly, even maddeningly depressingly impossible. Impossible if you forget the truth of this. You are not alone. Impossible if you are relying only on yourself. So, remember this, please. You are not alone. I have prayed my fair share of prayers stemming from true despair and heartbreak and pain and flung up my fair share of hail Mary’s as I launched into something far bigger than what circumstances

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and common sense would currently suggest I have the ability and resources to create and successfully execute.

What I have found at the end of my rope and my wits, which is something what it has taken to remind me how life really works. That these things that I was afraid are impossible for me to get through or pull off are impossible, if I'm trying to do it on my own, I'm trying to create with a lower-case c instead of stepping into the unknown and surrendering to Creativity, capital C, and that that what wants to happen through me.

So often, what comes as an answer to my prayers when I haven't yet made the shift out of my small limited self are these grace-filled salvific words of wisdom and truth. You are not alone. So, once I worked on these two particular paintings, I shared them in my newsletter, I'll share them in the notes for this episode, and I'll post them on Instagram as well.

So, these two paintings, I was actually so overwhelmed by. I was debilitatingly frozen, pretty much paralyzed, miserable with fear and doubt, and not able to proceed, which was exceptionally tricky as one was already sold because it was a commission, my largest ever, by far.

So, I was in this place of despair and self-loathing for getting myself into this space. Until I got to the place where I remembered that I am not doing this on my own. I got into a place where I asked for help, let go, and surrendered to it.

They were two very important paintings for me personally, creatively, and also pragmatically speaking. Together, the sales from these two totaled over 20K and that was not an insignificant amount to me at that time. It's not now either. And that amount then, that was high stakes for me. That was literally make it break it time.

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The smaller of the two is actually entitled You Are Not Alone because I literally heard those words as I was painting it and was so deeply at peace. I hadn't been before. I had been massively praying and despairing as I was trying to settle myself and work on this painting. But then I literally heard these words.

And then I was deeply at peace. And then, in the next moment, so overwhelmed and scared that I ran upstairs, dove into bed, and pulled the covers over my head, hoping that the voice would not follow. I know, that sounds ridiculous. I really wanted to edit it out of the newsletter and I still want to edit it out of this podcast, even though I've already said it in the newsletter. But there you go. That's what happened.

And these two paintings were also very significant to me because they ended up being owned – one was commissioned by a woman, and another woman that I also deeply respect purchased it. So, the fact that I held both of these women in such high regard made the destination of these paintings very special to me, as well as other meanings that were embedded in the paintings themselves.

So, other times, the message you are not alone comes through as an answer to my prayer and it is in a more ordinary but no less miraculous medium. It comes to me through the text of a friend who was there with encouraging, loving, nonjudgmental words.

It can come through finding a surprise note your brother left after his last visit. It comes to you in the way a mentor or teacher smiles at you in a lovingly amused way that says you are not currently seeing the potential in yourself that is so clear to them. It comes from the colleague, peer, ally who says, "You're amazing. You are doing this. You're doing this."

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It comes through via the other friend who stops by with flowers and a long hug, just because she had the sense that you needed that. It comes through the smile of a stranger, a phone call with your family, a conversation with loved ones at the end of the day. It comes from your dog's unbridled adoration of your mere existence. It comes from a small child's arms around your neck.

It can come in a myriad of ways. But just know, if you're open to receive it, it always comes. It can come as well through those times when you just need to move from your knees to laying down on the earth and feeling her rise up to support you at every square inch and allowing yourself to drop more heavily, more deeply into that unfailing embrace.

And here is one more not to forget. You are not alone also comes through you. You can be the answer to someone else's prayer. You can, in ways big and small, be the vehicle for the energy and love that is, "You are not alone." You can be the bridge that helps them to cross over from, "It's impossible, I can't make it through," to standing on the other side, better, stronger, and better-loved for the journey.

A dear, side friend of mine repeated these words to me earlier this summer. We must remember that there are other forces at work in the world, in addition to the human ones. I do believe this. I do believe part of what makes sacred dreams sacred is that it requires us to relinquish the small puny idea of the egos that we are somehow going to do it on our own.

Dream your impossible sacred dreams and then reach out. Ask for help. Listen for, trust in, and surrender to the voices and forces that answer back. You are not alone. Let's remember too this other sacred dream, that we be the answers to one another's prayers, that we be the living, breathing, human embodiment of, you are not alone.

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Let us remember that that is possible. It is within reach for each and every one of us every single day. As Ram Dass said, "We are all just walking each other home." That is how we get to the other side of impossible. With love and gratitude, Leah.

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. Two assignments for you today. One, how can you be the answer to someone else's prayer? Maybe they don't know that they're praying for the answer, you are not alone. But how can you be that answer anyway?

Can you drop a loved one a written message? Can you drop a written message and leave it somewhere that someone is not expecting it and remain anonymous, like maybe in the windshield of someone's car and you leave a small gift card and a note? You know, without me coming up with lots of examples, I know if you just get quiet and tap in right now and ask yourself, how can I today, this week, this month, be an answer to someone's prayer?

I have a feeling you're listening to this podcast for a reason and that prayer has already been tapping on the door of your psyche, just waiting to come in and be heard and have a conversation with you. So, give yourself time to reflect on that and to know that which wants to be known, and then be that living prayer, that embodiment of you are not alone for someone else.

And second, I want you to think of what comes to mind when I ask you, you know, what can be a symbol that you keep in your everyday environment to remind you that you are not alone?

Did someone give you a gift one time, write a note with just the words you needed to hear at the time you needed to hear it most? Is there a picture of

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a loved one that you want to keep forever close? Whatever it is, again, without giving too many examples, I know that if you sit with your own deep self and pose this question, you will get the answer that's been waiting to be heard. You are not alone.

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you've enjoyed this podcast, if these episodes have been useful for you, meaningful, uplifting, inspiring, empowering, that is awesome. If you take them about you in your everyday life into places that are comforting to you or challenging, that is awesome. Thank you.

And, if you want to spread this energy of, "You are not alone," and you feel like this podcast is one way you can do that, please share, subscribe, go to iTunes. That helps this podcast become more sharable. But whatever way it occurs to you to share I know will be the right way. And when you're ready to take this work deeper, The Art School is here and waiting for you.

So, come on over to my website, www.leahcb.com and sign up for my newsletter. That way, you'll be the first to know about any and all upcoming Art School events. The mastermind will be reopening for enrolment for 2021 in November so keep your eyes peeled for that, as well as other Art School options being offered, both later this year, shorter versions of the Art School, and in 2021.

It really is an extraordinary community and, holy smokes, an epic, epitome, embodiment of, "You are not alone," creative energy, in all senses of the word. You will be surrounded by extraordinary human community as well as humans who are all about tapping into that which wants to happen, all caps, Creativity with a capital C, and just immersing ourselves in the unseen energies that are every bit as palpable and important to our

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physical work and thriving as the making aspect, as the artifact, the art which is the artifact of our experience.

So, we would love to have you join us. And again, I think you'll be blown away by what's happening in this corner of the universe. So, do get on that mailing list and I would love to see you in a future Art School.

So, to close the podcast today, this is kind of a mini extension of a coach with me. But I want you to just consider something lightly. Is there an area in your life that is seeming impossible because you are trying to do it on your own? And can you trust yourself to know the difference between resignation and giving up and passivity, versus the discernment you need to know, what is mine to do, and then where do I need to let go and open up and let in that which wants to help me? Let in other people or maybe other forces greater than me?

I do know it's that line where you trust that you are not alone that can be so scary, but it's exactly that line as well where the epic creativity and the massive magic happen. So, consider that for yourself as you go about your week.

Where is that line for you? What is yours to do and where do you need to surrender and open yourself up, to know and trust that you are not alone? That truly will help you move to the other side of impossible. Have an impossibly amazing beautiful week, everyone.

Someone from the retreat last weekend had said, "Oh my gosh, this is the kind of unreal that can only happen in this group." So, it became a hashtag, a refrain, an anthem, rallying cry of sorts, "The unreal that is the real deal." So, wishing you all that kind of energy this weekend and week beyond and I look forward to talking with you next time.