

Ep #119: Elixir for the Soul with Ana Muriel



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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Ana: You could actually invite that ultimate version of you to be somehow awake now. And that, I decided to transform somehow a second stage of my understanding of who I can be as a mother and thus I create. And that allowed basically this new portal of creative projects to start to bloom. And that's where I am at now. Just not losing faith is something that happened after being in this group of amazing Art Schoolers that we feel we can do it and that it's possible. And whatever we, as each other, mirror different aspects of our creative journey, we see in the others amazing things and you believe in what you can do as well.

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That was a clip from my recent conversation with Ana Muriel. Ana is an artist, a mother of three, a wife, a teacher of movement, and a beloved member of the Art School community. She believes in the alchemy that happens when devotion comes to rule our life and how it transforms us and builds us up into unimaginable versions of who we are. She is also a mentor to other women at various stages in their life.

Ana's story is one of the exquisite and extraordinary stories from the Art School. I find myself, when I make these introductions to Art Schoolers, even reluctant to read their outstanding bios because once I get to know them as a person, I know that even the most extraordinary and illustrious and beautiful bios don't capture the exquisite and beautiful essence of the humans, the women, the capital C Creatives that are part of this community.

To say that I am moved and humbled by the people and stories that find their way to the Art School is a vast understatement. And I am also so grateful for these individuals that they share their stories with you. Because even though from around the world and likely with very different contexts, I

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think you will hear that common chord of humanity in their story. And then, it might resonate with something in your life. And some of those chords that I think our conversation, Ana's and my conversation, may strike with you is the importance of knowing that you can awaken a giant within you now.

You can awaken that giant and that divinity that is your soul now and live from that capital C Creative place, no matter where you find yourself on your creative journey. And also know that whether you are an immediate part of this community or not, that you are part of this greater movement, of which one of the anthems is, "Yes, my dreams are more than possible. Actually, I am doing this."

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

Hello everyone, and welcome to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. Welcome, welcome to my home on a cozy Thursday wintery evening in Michigan. It's actually a very, very special evening. It is my son Elijah's 12th birthday. So, such a beautiful, extraordinary soul. So, I want to wish him a happy birthday. We just had a very beautiful family celebration day and I had everyone tucked in. And now I have some quiet time and I get to visit with you. And my heart is open and full, and so this seemed like a great time to record this podcast.

I am also celebrating this as my anniversary of becoming a full-fledged mother, a rebirth of my own. And I've actually decided that today – this is February 11th 2021. So, my oldest is 12 on 2/11/21. I have been feeling the need – and those of you who've been in my community, you've heard me

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talk about this practice of, at times you need to declare your own holy and sacred days throughout your life. And this is actually one I'm claiming as mine.

So, I might talk about this on a future episode. I might not. I haven't decided yet. But I do talk about this practice of declaring your own sacred and holy days and finding those times in your life when you are meant for that, when that is what is necessary, when you must find yourself in the place where you commit to a reimagining, an awakening, a recreation of yourself and finding something that moves you, that changes you from the inside out, like such an elevated emotion, such a changed way of being that you know you are not the same person going forward. And this is one of those days for me.

So, this is like a quiet announcement, if it's even an announcement, I guess. Just a quiet, actually intimate sharing with those of you all around the world, thank you for being here. Things are moving and changing in the world, and as are all of us, right? And so, I want to be awake to that. And it's a wonderful time in my life for me, and I know for many of you it's a challenging time and a wonderful time.

And wherever you are out there listening, thank you for sharing this time with me. And if you want to talk about these times of changing and about calling your vision back and recalibrating yourself, reconditioning yourself to become a match for that vision, to become the greatest version of you in this short but precious, precious life we have, I would love to visit with you.

You can join in on one of these free workshops I offer every month. It's such a lovely gathering. Or you can dive in and spend a glorious, beautiful, lifechanging 12 weeks with us in the Art School. Or you can join in, in spirit. That is also profound.

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So, wherever you are joining in, I am grateful for you. I've been thinking a lot lately – I shared last week on the podcast how February, for me, is this month of all of these res, calling back, going deeper, this restoration, this reviving time, this reimagining, this recalibrating, yeah, a deep restorative and realigning time. And something that is clear to me is that there is a growing momentum in this work and I see it reflected back to me in these conversations that I've been having with Art Schoolers, that we are doing something in the sphere we care so much about, that Creativity with a capital C, creating beautiful lives and art and success.

And whatever your genre and medium is. We have artists in medicine. We have artists in business. We have artists in theatre, in music, in the visual arts, in literature. But it is really defining what greatness is for you and trusting that you get to create that and be safe and secure and successful on your own terms.

And for us, it is breaking the fur-minute mile. That's the collective thing that's happening. One person's doing it and then it's contagious and then there's a momentum. And you'll hear Ana today talk about that, about the power of being in a group with this kind of beautiful feminine powerful creative energy that's constructive. Powerful in a collectively enhancing and generative and constructive way.

So, before I introduce you to beautiful Ana and our conversation, I want to share just a little bit from my conversation with my son Elijah, the birthday boy, tonight. A conversation we had after everyone else had left the table. He is a deep thinker, an old soul, and I enjoy that so much.

And he was saying, "Thank you, mom, for everything that you've done for me and for bringing me into this world." It's going to get me choked up. And I said, "Well, it's been one of my greatest gifts. Thank you and I love you so

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much. And my life is ever so enriched more and more because you chose me as your mother.” And I said, “Well, what do you think? My life has been so enriched over the last 12 years and I know it will be even more so over the next 12 years. So, I want to hear about what you’re excited about over the next 12 years.”

And we talked about he enjoys school and things he wants to study and he has really been enjoying skiing and he wants to try out more of that and sports. Loves his friends. Loves story. Loves myth. Loves art. Loves history. He’s got such a great sense of awe and curiosity and a love of learning. And also of people. And he’s just an affectionate, caring kid.

And he said, “Well mom, what about you?” And I said, “I think I want to learn how to do what I already do and love but with a much greater ease and also just to love so much more deeply, to love everyone that I already love so much more deeply, my family, you guys, our extended family. Also, to love the world and to show that through the work that I do.”

And he said, “Oh mom, I don’t think you need to improve there.” And I said, “That’s an interesting way of putting it. I wasn’t thinking about it as improving. It’s just like, it’s a heart desire.”

So, there’s a few different reasons I wanted to share that story. One is because today, you get to hear this conversation with just this beautiful soul, Ana, and you get to hear from this amazing renaissance woman, this renaissance woman. She exemplifies that, who has moved across the world and is mothering and is mentoring and is bringing this soulful, beautiful art to the world.

And that has been a journey that she has adventured and lived and explored into. That’s not something you can declare as a major when

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you're in college. That's not something that you can – I was talking recently with a former private client who and reengaged me for some consulting at this big juncture in his life and career. And he was contemplating this space, this blank space to fill out on a possible contract opportunity form about who he was and what he would be doing.

And I said “You know, this seems daunting because whatever you put there, of course it's going to be too small for you. It's this small, blank space. And so, in many ways, leaving it blank is a better approximation, comes closer to who you really are, who we all really are, the ineffable, than anything you can put there. anything you can put there is going to make you feel contracted and cramped and small. So, it's kind of like walking that line of you know who you are, and then you can put on your analytical mind and decide, legally, analytically, what do you want to put in that line?”

And I think, for all of us to have this time to come back to the vastness of who we are – and that has been one of my greatest takeaways from this brief time of reflection I've had in February and also reflecting on this conversation with Ana and thinking about so many of my amazing extraordinary clients.

So many of our challenges and difficulties, I think, are when we start to mistake ourselves these delusions of smallness. When we think we are so small and the obligations or the demands or the quote unquote mountains in our life are so big. But if we can give ourself the time and space to retreat from life and to reconnect to the eternal, the infinite, the vast truth of who we are, that can right so many things that then we don't need to thin our way out of. It just is a cosmic reorienting of your perspective and the world is right again.

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So, that's one reason I wanted to share this. The other reason is that there was a point on my journey where I wanted to be more altruistic. I could sense a bigger why for myself in the world. I could sense wanting to have a great impact and change people's lives. And I also really needed to move out of survival mode. I needed to move into a place where I could know that I can pay my bills month by month. And then, from month by month, I needed to move from knowing that I could pay my bills three months at a time, and then six months at a time, and that I could do what I love and generate an income, or I could not think about money in this way that made me experience stress or smallness and not think about work or life in a way that made me feel like I was reactive or that there was something to dread or I was back on my heels.

So, I did this. It was an interesting time because I have always been a spiritual person. And yet, there is that biological stress, that emotional, mental stress of what happens when you're under financial stress and then the relationship stress that it can create. So, I know that.

And at that time too, I was like, I shouldn't have the stress. I wish I could just care about saving the world and changing people's lives. So, I wanted to share this for those of you who that might be where you find yourself on the journey. And that is okay. So, do not judge yourself, do not shame yourself. Know that that is every bit as spiritual and as sacred a part of your journey and also as sacred a part of your work in the world as it is when you can move into a space where your needs are met.

It's Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It's amazing how, when your needs are met, you have to do less work towards – I think you really have to be a saint. There's a lot of work, if you don't have your basic needs met, to open your heart and be generous and have this endless energy for thinking about the impact you can create in the world.

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So, that was my second point. Honor your journey and know that that opening of the heart also extends towards yourself and that sacred work of learning that you are worthy of finding your way to a place where you trust and your strength in the beauty and the value and the resourcefulness that you're able to call upon, to move beyond month by month, to move to six years – six months – hey six years, why not? To move to having a big fat margin in the bank so that your greater attention can move to, you know, what is the world calling you to? What is your soul calling you to and that you get to give your creative attention and energy to that?

So, another way of saying all of this is honor the passage and the journey. And that's another thing that I was thinking about in reflecting on this conversation with Ana, is I have been able to be with her and see her grow and see her journey over a two-year period now, and don't discount or underestimate the differences that can be made over a few years.

Day by day by day, it can seem like nothing is changing. But have faith. Be consistent. Keep coming back to the practice of believing over and over again. Know it is possible. Claim that yes, I am doing this. Connect to that vastness. Connect to that big capital T Truth. Be bigger because you are, because it's the truth of who you are. Be bigger than those small voices that want to derail you and allow yourself that momentum. Allow yourself that vast truth. Allow yourself to contribute to the momentum of it with consistency and whenever you can, plug into community. And plug into community momentum, whether it's through podcasts like this, whether it's through joining in with the actual community, whether it's through cultivating and finding your own community, or mentoring others, as you'll hear, Ana has a beautiful group with her Wildflowers community.

And just know, the work you are doing every day, even if it doesn't look like that needle is moving, say to yourself, "I am doing this and this is good."

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This is enriching my life today right now, and therefore t's enriching the world." And so, now it is my great honor to introduce you to Ana Muriel.

Ana is an artist, a mother of three, a wife, a teacher of movement, a lover of words that inspire, and a Capricorn dreamer. She believes in the alchemy that happens when devotion comes to rule our life and how it transforms us and builds us up into unimaginable versions of who we are. She mentors mothers in different stages of their lives. She loves music. She's an endless researcher of movement and the many ways it heals our mind, body, and how it is a door for creativity.

She's passionate about reading scripture, books on parenting, and stories of women who find victory as artists and creatives while they still nourish their homes. She loves to write and create insightful projects. Our Wildflowers is her more recent project, dedicated to uplift and mentor mothers. Columbia is her birth country and the UK is her home residency. And we were so grateful to have her also find a creative home within the Art School.

Please enjoy this conversation with Ana Muriel.

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Leah: I think I know the story of what brought you to the Art School, but can you share some of that story now?

Ana: Yes, so one of the amazing things for me was, of course, you were just a voice in a podcast out there somewhere in America. And me being somehow like away in another continent and also not having, necessarily, any relationship to you, it felt like something out there. And when I listened to your podcast, it was like I was called home. There was something in your

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voice, in the way you expressed yourself about how this part of us is calling us home always and the way you used poetry and storytelling and all of this.

So, I was in the lowest, lowest, I would say, season. I think in many ways, as a mother, as a woman in my self-esteem, and also as a creative and as an artist I was losing faith of what I could do because being in another culture, living in a different place in the UK from Columbia, I was challenged at many levels in how I could express my potential. And also, the fact of being a mother and also falling pregnant of a new baby and not knowing how to bring everything together was when you started to resonate so strongly.

So, the first Art School was precisely when I was about to have my first encounter in direct with you after podcasting for a while. And it was basically this experience of being pregnant and starting the first warmups that the Art School had in the summer. And then going through my birth and knowing every breast feed to my baby that you were there with this other group of Art Schoolers. And I would just remember things that I had forgotten that were always there, but they were somehow burdened.

And I do remember this super-clearly, that you keep repeating in your different modules, every time that you're doing something, remind yourself that you're doing this, "I am doing this," in a way that you are not grappled by the negative thinking and the negative beliefs. And somehow, I just started to do that. And I just started to remember, as I breastfeed, I'm just doing this and this is okay.

And as I was cooking, I was just repeating to myself, "I am just doing this." And somehow, this slow-cooking of, "I am doing this..." And I am doing this in the way that I was able to accept what I was doing and not necessarily

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closing doors to what I could do later. And that just brought a new light to what I could do.

And then, suddenly, it was not only what I was doing. But as I heard your voice and as I was part of this first journey through Art School, these things in my brain just opening up, new pathways of understanding how I could discern the negative voice and be bigger than that.

And you also keep reminding us in the Art School how we can be bigger than what our voices that are grappling, like this ju-jitsu move that you mentioned, that they basically hold you, these voices, and that you can be bigger than that. And that was something that just completely started to change my understanding.

And then as I was mothering my baby and breastfeeding, it started to slow-cook in me. And in the year that I was with this child and as I mother my other two boys, I just couldn't not be part of it again. And I was just somehow really literally putting everything in my prayers, in my meditations, visualizing that I was part of the second round of Art Schools. And now that I've been in the second Art School, I cannot tell you, I just went to the next level again.

It was like, this that I thought I understood I actually was able to dive deeper and there were words and there were understandings of becoming that person that I was able to become, not one day but actually now, while I talk to people, while I mother. I could be that.

A feeling that I remember you inviting us to feel, that everything was falling into place. And that falling into place experience could be happening now, not necessarily only when that future experience as the ultimate experience is. Like, you could actually invite that ultimate version of you to be

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somehow awake now. And that, I decided to transform somehow a second stage of my understanding of who I can be as I mother and as I create. And that allowed basically this new portal of creative projects to start to bloom. And that's where I am at now. Just not losing faith is something that happened after being in this group of amazing Art Schoolers that we feel we can do it and that it's possible. And whatever we, as each other, mirror different aspects of our creative journey, we see in the others amazing things and you believe in what you can do as well.

Leah: Ana, thank you. My deepest thank you. That felt like a full-circle soul-nourishing moment for me, which is so extraordinary, especially given the way that you began the story. Because I remember clearly talking to you about that first Art School and you were expecting and you had concerns that you wouldn't be able to keep up with it.

And I remember, we talked about will it be okay for you to be nourished during this time, for you to allow yourself to be there and that the growth and the nourishment that you need will come to you and that you can take care of your baby and cocoon during this time and be in this cosmically glorious and also very physically and emotionally difficult place, like caring for a newborn is, and also let your creative soul, let your feminine psyche also be mothered and nourished and trust that that is the work for you at that point.

And for a lot of people, that's scary, to put down working, to put down, "I'm going to effort," and to sync into a receptive place of, "No, this part of my passage is about rebuilding at a very deep level and nourishing and receiving." And I love that something that resonated and took hold for you is, "I am doing this." And that feeling that that building of strength that comes from reaffirming that this gathering, this coalescing, this immersing

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yourself in a community that is so nutrient-dense for creatives and for artists, that that is – it is essential and it's good. It's just good.

And then to see now, as Alma, beautiful Alma has grown, and you move through a different stage of babyhood and mothering, and also to see your other creative works growing. And I think such a precious gift to have reexperienced a restorative place and experienced how not just human babies can grow from a restorative place, but how the seeds of our next work can really take root and flourish from a deeply trusting and restorative place. And you just articulated that so beautifully, which of course being the poet that you are...

Ana: It's incredible. I mean, my dream now, my envisioning now, when I sit and meditate and think of this becoming and the potential part of me that is still calling me and awakening is now a part of this new retreat that you one day mentioned in a podcast you will do. And I do imagine me being part of it and being part of that retreat and actually meeting you in person.

And I think once you are an Art Schooler, you don't want to not be an Art Schooler again. You want to keep being part of everything, every round. That's something that is really beautiful because it's not like once you go there it's done. There is a progress, a new unfolding, a new seed blossoming. And it's so incredible to witness because I haven't seen anything like this anywhere else. And you are able to reach each of us in a way that, as you – let's say me, as we go through a coaching session, it's like you are feeding everyone else in the group. And as you do the coaching to someone else, even if it doesn't necessarily express my own situation, it feeds me in many other ways.

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So, it's incredible what you do and how you are able to bring all these baby art projects to a place of fertilizer kind of place where we all feel blooming. I can feel like the whole group in a collective force is blooming together.

Leah: Thank you for that. And I – you know, what you shared too about your perspective about how witnessing and hearing, listening, being present for someone else's story, even if the context is different, is nourishing and is healing. And not too long ago, I was reading about a Native American medicine man who I guess one of the questions – this was the story that was told – is he would ask someone if they were ill, was like, lately have you given yourself the time or space to listen to the stories of another?

And just coming from the tradition that there is something innately healing about the story of another. And I think too, someone speaking through story and the way that we do it in the Art School, there is cognitive psychology and there is coaching and positive psychology. And then there's also metaphor and myth. And we're so lucky to have a group that's willing to go into these places of, like mystery and have these expansive imaginations, and then also these rigorous analytical minds and are willing to – and a space where we have people who really marry the two and integrate the two well together.

I think that experience of experiencing others who are willing to do that and tell and process their own stories in a space like that is healing, is nourishing. I know it is for me witnessing it. And it's so deliciously astonishing and fun. It's delightful.

Ana: It is delightful. And then you see the very engineering minds bringing everything into structure and then you see all these poetic minds or musical

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minds or theatrical minds bringing their part onto it. So, it's this right and left play of energies all in one group.

Leah: Yes, I love it. I'm biased, but I love it. So, tell me too, I would love to hear – I know of some but I would love to have you share with our listeners some of the projects that in your heart as you were also pregnant and nursing and then through this last year and through this last Art School, what were some of the seeds of dreams or projects that you'd been working on and how have they grown and what's your vision for where you would like them to be?

Ana: Yeah, so as I started, I was very full of doubts about what I could create as a mother. I was immersed in the idea that I didn't have the time, that my creative expression was not good enough because of being not my first language English, or because of my accent. And that was my obstacle.

So, as we started the process and I started to embrace this place of being bigger than this, I started to nourish the seed of – one of the projects was mini audio sound casts, I call them. And they are like very small compilations of – not small. Let's say 15-20-minute compilations of a story with a poem that I would start to record with a topic or with a theme. And I would just start to send them to my database and to the people that I knew and started to use that as a starting point of letting my voice be heard, despite my accent, despite my mistakes and knowing that I was doing it from a place of truth and devotion and my creative expression, even with mistakes, could still reach.

And so, once this first Art School went, I was able to develop a second season for these sound casts. They are called Soul Invitations. And the Soul Invitations became my first anchor to my creativity and my voice. And one of the listeners who has a bigger audience than I do, she's a renowned

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mentor and yoga teacher in the UK, she asked me to commission my Soul Invitations as part of her offerings in a wider platform that she offers to membership students.

So, I was then now commissioned to do my Soul Invitations, be paid for them, and then they were not anymore just a little donation. That's how they started. And they became now like a commissioned little art piece. And now my youngest boy is producing the music for them, because he loves music production. And so, they are becoming these art pieces of me with my voice and my youngest boy doing the music and then this wider audience of the UK, artists mainly, just listening to my Soul Invitations as part of their membership.

So, every month now I am doing this. That's one. And the other one was, through going through my first round of Art School, I realized how much I felt the need, as a mother, to help other mothers in this place because I realized how much any mothers go through the same journey of feeling lost or feeling deprived and lost in their creativity. So, I started to create this idea which then started to bloom during the second Art School about mentoring mothers from a program that I'm just about to launch.

And it's basically not from the parenting style or from the way they do their mothering. It's more for the woman, for the archetype that mothers have as they sometimes forget what they are. They just concentrate only on the mother side and they forget that they are wild and that they are artists and that they have this immense capacity to still create.

So, the program is more about that woman that is also a mother, but is also so many other things. And it's that project that has been simmering through the second Art School and is just about to be launched in February. And I have developed the webpage and we have already launched a few

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promotions. And it's like this energy, this force that comes through me believing that I am doing this from a place of authenticity, and that any other from pregnant to teenagers, mothers, could just meet in the same circle because we all go through this somehow waiting for this life that is a future life to arrive, but we are forgetting how this life that we are having now as mothers has so much potential.

Leah: That is so needed. And I think coming together as women too, to not only share how to move through motherhood, how to mother, but allowing for the greater force of who you are to also be present through that, what a gift to motherhood. What a gift to children. And then also, like, what a gift to the world, to allow women to be full. Like many things, including a mother, but too with it too often happens that as we move through motherhood, we somehow condition, or we're conditioned, or it happens that we feel we lose other pieces of ourselves.

And it definitely is a time of shift and change, I know. But what I don't believe has to happen is this sense of losing something that's so vital to one's self. And I think too that the way that you have moved through your own journey makes you such an astounding mentor. And I also want to say, isn't it interesting, like for anyone listening – you know how you had some doubts, with English not being your first language or mistakes, or me having listened to you two Art Schools, your voice is so beautiful. It's so soothing. I could listen to you talk – there's the way you tell a story, and then there's your voice. And there's just the beautiful musical quality to it.

So, it's always interesting to hear those things that people think are a disadvantage and I would have thought that's part of your magic. And I think – I believed you used the word elixir one time in the Art School to describe these pieces of art, these audio pieces of art. Is that correct?

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Ana: Yeah, because for the mothers, I also created these elixirs, which are more or less the same as Soul Invitations. Soul Invitations became a commissioned project for this woman. And then the Elixirs became, because I couldn't use the same name now that they're commissioned to someone else. So, Elixirs became the Soul Invitations for the mothers. So, they are these little journeys for, like, short 10-minute, 15-minute journeys where the medicine of voice and journeying with poetry or with a prayer or with a story just makes the day for the mother as they do their mothering. And that is part of the program as well.

Leah: That is brilliant because spot-on true, that it is an elixir. It is an actual medicine. It is poetic. It is beautiful in a metaphor, and more than that, it is also a literal nourishment during the day. And I know that, in the space that I create, in the spaces that you create, that it is reinforcing that I am doing this. I am doing this for myself and it is working and it is good, is such a part of what helps that elixir take hold.

Ana: Exactly. And actually, one of the things in elixirs that I remind mothers that I needed to hear myself and it's inspired actually from you, but it's put in a phrase that I wanted to – it's from a poet. It's a very young poet called Nayyirah Waheed. And she says, "And I heard her say, you are afraid of love. But love is not afraid of you." And I keep repeating that because somehow, we are afraid of love, but love is not afraid of us and it's holding us and it's like this presence that I want to remind in the elixirs that is bigger than us and that love is not afraid of us. And somehow, that becomes this medicine, this reminder, this I am doing this kind of motto as well.

Leah: And so, then within the elixirs for the mother, is this within the Wildflowers group? Is that still the – I love that name.

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Ana: It's Our Wildflowers. And yeah, Our Wildflowers is the big umbrella, and we have the elixirs as the audios. And then the idea is to invite, as the program goes six weeks, invite mothers to journey with a theme. I bring special guests as well to talk, so it's not about me being the leader of knowing everything. It's actually a place for us to share and hold the space for each other so we have so many beautiful guests coming. And it's going to be, I think, one of those victories that I have to say is thanks to the Art School.

Leah: That's amazing. So, that's launching in February?

Ana: Yes.

Leah: Right around the corner. Congratulations.

Ana: It's an online platform with the website, with the audios, with these special guests. And I've been cultivating it through our Art School journey. So, every art date that we had together, the Thursdays and Fridays, the extra art dates, and every opportunity because, of course, having six hours difference, sometimes I would have to listen to your coaching sessions at night while breastfeeding Alma, still in the really late hours. And I would just put in my headphones and take little notes and record my voice.

So, the Wildflowers is somehow this idea that we are all different. We need sometimes different times, different spaces, different speeds. And I was feeling so discouraged for some time before the Art School because I felt I was very slow and I think once in one of your coachings you said, "You are at the right time always." Somehow you reassured me that I was doing it as it was meant to be. And somehow, then the Wildflowers was able to happen slowly and I was able to just let the Art School nourish it as it was ready to happen, it would happen. And now it's February and they're ready.

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Leah: Amazing. So amazing. Well, so you have a wealth of wisdom to offer. And I'm so glad that already your soul was called to mentor others. And so, for anyone listening, what words of wisdom, what advice might you offer the listeners?

Ana: My goodness. First of all I would say that it's never too late. Nothing is wasted. That you are always on time to be bigger than the circumstances and you're always welcomed from that higher place of love that is holding you. That's a very important reminder that you are doing this, if you are coming from a place of love, you will always be on time. There is nothing wasted.

And I will definitely probably say to the audience, I will use the words of a poet, Victoria Erickson. And I think she describes everything I would like to share with the audience that it's just so full of the right advice. And she says, "Half of me is filled with bursting words. And half of me is painfully shy. I crave solitude, yet also crave people. I want to pour life and love into everything, yet also nurture my self-care and go gently. I want to live within the rush of primal intuitive decisions, yet also wish to sit and contemplate. This is the messiness of life that we all carry in multitudes, so must sit with the shifts. We are complicated creatures and ultimately the balance comes from understanding. The water flowing, flexible and soft, subtly powerful and open, wild and serene, able to accept changes yet still led by the pull of steady tides. And this is enough."

Leah: What a beautiful elixir, even more so to hear it through your gorgeous voice, Ana.

Ana: Thank you. Thank you for inviting me here. I'm so grateful.

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Leah: Thank you for spending this time with me. And thank you for your contribution to our community. I just have loved having you there. it's enriched everyone, myself included.

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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. Don't just take this information and be entertained by it or even informed. Take this information, think about it, reflect about how it applies to your life. Think deeply. Contemplate and move from being just a philosopher about life to actually being someone who initiates movement and change in their life, take this information, apply it, and make it transformational.

So, I have a pretty tall ask for you this week in terms of an assignment. That transformational word, that rebirth, reimagining word that seems to be the theme for me this month in February – and I feel like it's not just a theme for me. I feel like it's something that is in the collective right now, if I'm asking what is next for all of us, it's this invitation.

And also, having just talked with this beautiful mother and a mentor of mothers, whether or not you are a parent or a mother listening, you can take that metaphor of rebirth and ask yourself this tall question; if I were to be reborn, reimagined, transformed to that degree this year, who would I be?

Maybe it could be that you take the part of struggling artist and just shut down the struggling and decide never again, from here on out, artist. Maybe you decide to put down an entire identity and completely reinvent and reimagine yourself. Maybe you decide that the deep upgrade, elevation, recalibration that's called for in your life is to create so much

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space, so much space for yourself, for reconnection, for fun, for love, for reimagining.

So, allow yourself these questions and this kind of space to reconnect to that vastness. Because ultimately, this question about rebirth and transformation, I believe, is really an invitation to the initiation to be the truth of who you are, be this year, once and forever, bigger than all of those small voices that would tear you down.

In future podcasts, upcoming podcasts and upcoming Art School classes, I'm going to be talking about the neuroscience of this, including research about turning down that part of the neocortex that's responsible for that inner critic and methods and practices. And if you've been following my work, you know that I also love to blend the poetic, the philosophical, the spiritual, the creative, and intuitive along with the scientific. That's the intersection of all the things for which I, for years, was so hungry. And that's the kind of conversation that I love to have with all of you and that I find that so many of you are hungry for as well. One that encompasses all of those areas and that is not exclusive to one camp or the other.

So, if that's the kind of big conversation you would like to be a part of, please reach out. I would love to hear, what is the four-minute mile for you? What is that barrier that you're attempting to break, either in society or with a self-imposed limitation? What is that transformation that you really, really, really want, if you could wave a magic wand, what would be a miracle for you this year? What is the dream about which you want to be able to say unequivocally from the very deepest part of your being, not only is this possible for me, but I am doing this?

Thank you so much for joining us for another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you've enjoyed this podcast, if these episodes have been

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meaningful, inspiring, useful for you, the 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'm so grateful for all of you out there listening and I love hearing your feedback. So, whether that's an iTunes review or whether that's emailing us, support@leahcb.com just to say hello or perhaps to schedule an exploratory call with a member of my team to find out more about the Art School or the Art School mastermind.

The next session, the next 12-week session of the Art School kicks off March 2nd. And this is shaping up to be an extraordinary, extraordinary group. Not only do we have some of our beautiful amazing alum returning for another session. We also have some brand-new energy and faces joining us this time around.

As I mentioned earlier in this episode, that momentum is building and there definitely is this phenomenal effect that happens when you are consistent, this phenomenal compounding effect. So, I'd say some of the secrets are consistency and then compounding, which means consistency over time. And therefore, your investments compound. And then it's also the secret of the collective, of the collective momentum and of the community.

And if this is something that's been calling you, we would love to have you. This is really an extraordinary and special place and I obviously believe, and so it's also very wonderful to hear that affirmed by someone like Ana, who says, you know, truly she has never experienced or come across any other program or any other community like this.

And if you'd love to learn more, you can email support@leahcb.com or you can sign up by going to my website, www.leahcb.com and click on the link to the Art School.

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So, to close, I just want to thank Ana again for being such an enriching and beautiful presence in our Art School community and then sharing her voice, the elixir of her soul magic here with us on the Art School podcast. If you want to find out more about Ana and her work, we will have all that information in the show notes. You can also visit her website – it’s beautiful – at www.anamuriel.org. Also, her Instagram is lovely and an ever-inspiring oasis.

And so, what I want to leave you with today actually is a poem that she recently shared on her Instagram from the poet Rupi Kaur, “I will never have this version of me again. Let me slow down and be with her. Always evolving.”

So, for all of you dear listeners, please now that you will never have the version of yourself that you currently have ever again. Please slow down, savor his or her presence, and be with yourself. I am grateful to be with you. Have a beautiful week, everyone, and I look forward to talking with you next time.