

# Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Leah Badertscher**

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

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

Jennifer: Wait, there's other ways of doing this? My whole life, I've done it this one way. And when I really wanted something, I would just force it out even more. And so, I have specific examples of different channels that I've tuned to through the Art School. I was like, "This is so natural, and I didn't know I could work that way."

And it's, like, nourishing, the opposite of the way that I worked before and I've gotten myself very sick. So, my goal for the year is just to listen to the different channels and, like, how does this one feel? And try a different channel and, like, how does this one feel?

--

That was a clip from my recent conversation with Jennifer Sly. Jennifer is a technologist, educator, experienced designer, play advocate, and futurist. Over the past 20 years, Jennifer has experimented with emerging technologies to benefit individuals and communities. She is now interested in exploring the analogue counterpart to technology, ancient wisdom and our relationship to nature, in order to create a vibrant and resilient Earth as a gift to the occupants of the far future. She recently founded the Institute for the Year 3000 to collaboratively envision and create this future. Jennifer is also a veteran of the Art School and a member of our up-and-coming March 2021 class.

What Jennifer shares through these next two episodes – because this conversation I had with her will be this episode one and then upcoming episode two – it's really a mini masterclass, shared through the eyes of an Art Schooler and shared through the heat and imagination and brilliance of an Art Schooler.

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

So many times throughout our Art School experience, I get to listen to these extraordinary individuals, process, their journey and process what they're learning, and hear the wisdom, like their own organic hard-earned wisdom applied to their life and the particulars, the nitty gritty of their life. And I am blown away and thank god, I wish I could share this with more people. I wish more people could hear what they have to say.

It charts a course. It offers a great roadmap for those of you out there who may find yourself in a similar position that Jennifer talks about. Maybe you've been there. You have gone the path of muscling, forcing, pushing your way to great heights, and now something within you, it just won't cooperate anymore. You just can't operate in that same old way, and you're looking for a new way.

Maybe you've found yourself in that place where you feel frozen, your heart feels frozen, the creative channel feels dry and you're looking for nourishment, you're looking for that deep wellspring of life and joy and creativity. You're looking for that radio channel that you'll hear her talk about.

Also, a theme that I am going to emphasize in this episode and the next is the profound effect of declaring your intention. The effect it has on your life, the effect it has on the lives of those you haven't even met yet. So, thank you for being here and listening in. I think you're going to love these next two episodes.

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.

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

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

Hello everyone, and welcome to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. I hope this finds you doing well. And if you're not feeling so well, or at your best, or rather low, I am sending you lots of love this Valentine's day week. I'm recording this a few days after Valentine's day 2021. And while I am planning an upcoming episode about the power, the wisdom, the creativity of the heart, today's episode also has a heart theme.

You're going to hear Jennifer talk about opening her heart and what a profound effect that had on her life and the intersection of the heart and creativity. In fact, I think more than an intersection. I think they run in the same lane. So, wherever you are, sending you so much love.

We are enjoying beautiful snow here in Michigan and I'm also feeling – I'm really feeling my dreams of places like Arizona, like going back to Miraval, or Mexico, or somewhere tropical. And so, I really love it when I see some data and analytics about the podcast, and I see that we are charting high in some very tropical places.

So, for those of you listening, perhaps somewhere on a beach, thank you. It gives me some sort of vicarious delight to imagine you there. And I do also appreciate the beauty of the part of the world that we are in and like connecting with you wherever you are in your parts of the world.

And if you've never felt compelled to reach out yet, hey, consider this your nudge from the universe. I would love to hear from you. So, whether that's an iTunes review. Whether you email us to say, "Hey, I've been listening in. Here's what I'm taking from the podcast," again, it's love to connect. I'd love to hear what resonates, what you'd like to hear more of, what you're looking forward to in the upcoming year and what's a challenge for you, what your goals and dreams are. That really helps me focus in on how best to focus my energies when it comes to this podcast.

## **Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly**

So, I think of that as this collaborative process and a conversation, so I would really love if it would be more of a two-way conversation and hear from more and more of you. And thank you so much to those of you who have reached out and let me know the effect that these episodes have had on your life. It never ceases to move me, astonish me, and I am so grateful. And also dreaming of a podcast Art School live meetup someday post-COVID. Maybe, I don't know, somewhere really warm, sunny, and tropical too. We'll see.

So, I am so excited to introduce you to Jennifer Sly in this episode. And I love the themes that just organically emerge from my conversation with her. I do send my Art Schoolers a survey beforehand that gives them a list of things we might cover, but then really, we all kind of throw it out the window and we just talk like we would talk.

I want you to get as close as you can to the experience of just being there live with two human beings and like you are sitting in on a conversation that we might have in Art School. I think that, to me, seems like the best way to bring value to you and also, I do hope for my Art Schoolers too that this is another avenue for them to explore their experience and then also see that the work that they are doing does ripple out into the world, including now to all of you, my dear listening audience.

And one of the themes that emerged from this conversation with Jennifer is this theme of declaring and defining yourself. You will hear her tell this story, her origin story with the Art School. And you'll hear her talk about when she heard me give a testimonial actually for Susan Hyatt, about a time when I wrote a letter for myself and I declared what I was going to do in that very pivotal and transformational year for me.

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

So, that right there too is so affirming, that that declaration I made and that then I shared in a testimonial for someone else opened a portal and opened worlds for another person who then actually ended up working with me, which I had not anticipated.

And as I was thinking about this, the importance, the power, the really lifechanging impact that defining and declaring to the world who you are and what you are about and what you are doing. As I was thinking about that, I was inspired to pull Big Magic by Liz Gilbert off the shelf and open it. And as luck would have it, as Big Magic would have it, this is the page to which I opened.

She's talking about permissions, the chapter on permission. And I just wanted to read a little bit to sort of set the tone for this conversation and this episode.

She writes, "Defending yourself as a creative person begins by defining yourself. It begins when you declare your intent, stand up tall and say it out loud, whatever it is. I'm a writer. I'm a singer. I'm an actor. I'm a gardener. I'm a dancer. I'm an inventor. I'm a photographer. I'm a chef. I'm a designer. I am this and I am that and I am also this other thing to. I don't know yet exactly what I am, but I'm curious enough to go find out. Speak it. Let it know you're there. Hell, let you know you're there. Because this statement of intent is just as much an announcement to yourself as it is an announcement to the universe or anybody else. Hearing this announcement, your soul will mobilize accordingly. It will mobilize extatically, in fact, because this is what your soul was born for."

And later, she goes on to write, "But you must be the one to start the conversation and then you must feel entitled to stay in that conversation. This proclamation of intent and entitlement is not something you do just

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

once and then expect miracles. It's something you must do daily forever. I've had to keep defining and defending myself as a writer every single day of my adult life, constantly reminding and rerepeating my soul and the cosmos that I'm very serious about the business of creative living and that I will never stop creating, no matter what the outcome and no matter how deep my anxieties and insecurities may be."

Later, she goes on to say that "I've found the right tone of voice for these assertions and you cannot afford to back down. The life you are negotiating to save after all is your own."

You know, every once in a while, I will have the good fortune of running into somebody who maybe knows me, maybe a little bit, maybe more than a little bit, but actually doesn't know my work that much, but they kind of know about my work.

And they will say, "Why do you do this? You pour so much into this. Why do you do this?" And to me, it's so clear that it isn't really an option when you're talking about, for yourself, for declaring to yourself and the cosmos who you are as a creative if you are built that way, and the importance of then doing it and participating in the miracle every single day. But then also knowing the effect that it has on other people to encourage their creativity, to believe in them, to believe in that seed and that soul in them that maybe hasn't been seen yet.

To me, it's so clear and it's so inevitable and also non-optional. "You cannot afford to back down," Liz Gilbert writes, "The life you are negotiating to save after all is your own." And so, while I can't do the work for my clients, I know what it feels like to be on that path of knowing that there's something within you that you want to bring out. And I know the power of declaring that intent of what you are going to bring out and who you are



## **Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly**

going to be. And I'm just so honored to be able to play a role in witnessing and supporting and encouraging and believing in advocating and championing for others as they declare who they are and what they are going to do.

And that's the theme that I wanted to offer to all of you to think about as you enter into this episode. And we are still early in the year of 2021. What is it that you want to declare? How do you want to define yourself? In what ways do you want to warm your heart, open your heart, open your mind, open your energy? What possibilities do you want to entertain? What possibilities beyond your imagining do you want to invite in?

And then, the other reason I love, love, love this passage from Big Magic is because she writes that, "This proclamation of intent and entitlement is not something you do just once and then expect miracles. It's something you must do daily forever." And that is really one of the cornerstones and one of my inspirations for the Art School, is that it is a practice and a way of life and a training and that is not to be a nuisance. That's not to be a weight or a burden. Because done in community, it can be this beautiful, abundant, amazing way to live, surrounded by extraordinary people doing it the very same way.

Maybe out in the everyday, quote unquote real world, people don't do it that way. But in our real world, people are doing just that; yes, proclaiming who they are, saying that they are entitled to their dreams. But beyond that, they are going to work for them. And something they are going to do every day, recommitting and recommitting to redefining themselves and what they're capable of, and what's possible for them to experience in their life.

Because I don't think – I've listened to my conversation with Jennifer a few times now and I don't think we cover this. But throughout the Art School, a



## **Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly**

number of times she'd say things like, "I have never felt this way in my life before. I have never experienced what I'm experiencing right now." And it was a good thing.

It was an opening. It was an expansion. And I know that feeling. I cherish and treasure that feeling. Creativity, pursuing my dreams has led me to that feeling again and again, just when you were grateful and you thought you knew the world and you thought you knew yourself; you go on this journey and you learn how to open your heart more, your mind more, your spirit, your body, your energy more, and you experience a world within worlds.

And that is the miracle within the miracle. And I do think that that is one of the profound transformative powers of creativity and of following your vision and following your sacred dream. And Jennifer has this amazing enthusiasm, not to mention this incredibly brilliant mind and mind-blowing imagination, which you'll hear more about really in episode two. We get into it in episode one but hang around for episode two for sure because it's so much fun to play with Jennifer and her imagination. It is a cool place.

So, I also have a little bit more of a formal introduction and bio for Jennifer. You heard a bit of it in the intro, but Jennifer is a true renaissance woman and her bio continues – I couldn't fit it all in the intro. So, in addition to everything that I shared with you there, there's this.

Jennifer Sly also currently works for the Minnesota Historical Society. She has been with the MNHS since 2010 and brings 20 years of experience at the intersection of technology, learning, and community. She has an MPA from Columbia University and has worked on projects with NEH, IMLS, NASA, The United Nations, and the MIT Media Lab.

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

Also, when you listen to this episode and will inevitably want to find out more about what she's up to, you can find her links at the Institute for the Year 3000 in our show notes, and then also on Instagram @institutefortheyear3000.

She is also working on a special offer on Etsy and a special offer for this listening audience, so we're very pleased and grateful for that. And without further ado, please enjoy this conversation with Jennifer Sly.

--

Leah: I'm so excited to welcome to the podcast today Jennifer Sly. Welcome, Jennifer.

Jennifer: I'm so excited to be here to talk to you today.

Leah: I have been looking forward to this since – I think we set this up several weeks ago even. And Jennifer has a mind and an energy, a creativity that is – it's not unusual in the Art School to have enthusiasm and exuberance and brilliance and Creativity with a capital C. And yours in particular, as I was saying when we were talking before we started recording, that you have a way of taking in the work and you have an enthusiasm for it and then your mind brings back your experience in ways that make me even think about, "Oh, that's so cool. I hadn't thought about it that way."

And so, I was also sharing with you that one of the reasons I want to do these podcast features is because it's one thing for me to speak to this audience about ideas and concepts. And then, I think it takes it to a different level to hear a real-life story from someone who has also taken in the concepts and done that coach with me work, where you've applied

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

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

them, and to hear what that process was like for you and what your experience has been.

So, I'm just delighted that you're here. And we were speaking just a little bit ago about starting with your origin story. How did you come to the Art School?

Jennifer: Yeah, this story amazes me. It's one of those moments where it all comes in a circle and then you're shocked that this journey actually started way before I even realized the decision to join the Art School. I had a friend who wanted to celebrate her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in Mexico. So, about two years ago, we went and were all laying on the beach. And these are beautiful friends of mine. And I'm publicly apologizing to my friend on the podcast because we were talking about our dreams and she said, "This year, I'm going to make \$100,000 on my art."

And I reacted really aghast. And so, I apologize to her right now for my response because it surprised me so much. Not the number – like, that would be amazing to be an artist and make \$100,000. But her confidence in saying that was actually what shocked me the most. And so, I actually said – I'm a little ashamed of this. I think I said something like, "Why do you think you can make \$100,000 off your art?" I was kind of aghast.

And she was like, "Because that's what I'm worth." And she said it so plainly that I was just, okay, it just surprised me so much. And she said, "I'm working with a coach and she's helped me come to that number." And I was like, "Oh, a coach. Okay. A coach sounds kind of cool."

I was like, "I think I'm ready for some life changes and I feel frozen in my life. It feels very rigid and empty." And Susan Hyatt got on my radar and I

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

was like, “I think I need this much energy from Susan Hyatt to start melting this frozenness that I feel like I’m in.

So, I went to one of the events she has in San Diego and I was like, “I’m just going to meet this woman in person. Can she really be like she is...”? And she actually is. So, I went through the whole weekend. And at the end of the weekend, she had testimonials that were recorded on video.

And I don’t know if you remember your testimonial, but you got on video and I was like, “This woman is beautiful. She’s got art in the back. What a great setting.” I think you had flowers. I was like, “Okay, I don’t know who this woman is, but she seems amazing.” And then you’re like, “I already recorded this once. I had a letter to myself about my dreams and they’ve all come true and even more than I’ve possibly imagined and I cried so I had to restart the video.”

And I was like, “What is on this letter? And I would just love to be able to write a letter to myself and accomplish those dreams.” And your style just resonated with me so much. So, I said, I’m just going to have – one, I’m signing up for Susan Hyatt because if this is what happened to you, I want more of that. And Susan really helped me melt and start opening my heart to more.

And then, I tracked you down and I was like, “I’m going to do the Art School,” because I just had it sitting there that I’m going to do this Art School with Leah, for sure. And then, you posted my friend the artist from the beach something about her work and I called my friend and I’m like, “How do you know this coach? She’s amazing.” And she’s like, “She’s my coach.” And I’m like, “The one you were talking about two years ago on the beach?” And she’s like, “Yeah, I think about what she says to me every day.” And so, I was like, I’d just arrived home, back to the beach.”

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

Leah: That story, I mean, you've told me that before and it is having the same effect on me hearing it again. It's this energy coursing through my body. Like, it's not only a full circle. There are figure-eights and full circles. That is so incredible. And it's got this element of the universe going wink-wink, wasn't that fun?

Jennifer: No, and it's just – this is what I've this year tried to really focus on. Because when you feel like you're stuck and you're in the same space, to me, even just having an open heart to possibilities was something new and to think about even just trying to brainstorm, what would I write to myself? What would even be on this letter that I'd want to accomplish in a year that would bring me to tears?

And so, that's just been this muscle that I've been really working on in the Art School, is just to have an open heart and an open mind, and open to energy. That's really what I've been working with this year too, because I am so intellectual, I like to rationalize everything and being embodied and in energy has really been an exciting part of my journey in the Art School.

Leah: Well, and I think too, that piece of you that is so brilliant – I mean, there's the creative brilliance and that intellectual brilliance, that rigor, and that served you well, like the rational, because you've created a lot of success that way.

And it's knowing that you can have that strength and those gifts, and then also bring in this piece of expanding the energetic capacity. And you were just sharing with me, like, one of your takeaways from the Art School that you described, vis-à-vis the radio metaphor. So, could you share that?

Jennifer: Yeah, I think one of the things that has been the biggest a-ha moment for me in the Art School is that there's a different way of working,

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

which has been successful. Actually, it said intellectual is a negative thing, so it's funny that you turned intellectual into a positive strength, I was like, I always feel like people's strengths are their weaknesses, and your weaknesses are your strengths.

But I've always had this go-to way of being successful, is there is a little bit of sacrifice. That has to be part of it. Like a little bit of pain that you have to put that in to deserve the reward. And this idea of pushing through it is something that has gotten me sick, that I actually got viral meningitis and was in the hospital because I was worn out from pushing through.

So, I tried to eliminate pushing through as part of my vocabulary. And my shiatsu person, once I started having bodywork done, said I had lawyer legs, which means I'm basically always in a crouched position with my hands clenched, ready to duke it out at any moment. So, I carried this energy in my body that's like, you give me the problem, I will find the solution, even if it requires emotional physical sacrifice and if I can't find the energy, I procrastinate and I pick a deadline to build up the pressure so that I have to either find that energy to push through and do that final sacrifice to be successful.

And part of that was a way to cover up imposter syndrome, to say I can't do it, I can't do it, I can't do it, and then create some sort of very stressful situation to give birth to whatever this idea was. And that, to me, as been my go-to for my entire life.

And so, if I really wanted to get something done, I would tune into this feeling and pump up the volume. And then, working with you, I realized there's a whole radio with different channels of getting inspiration, of working, of getting things done. And I find myself going back to this one channel that was like, you listen to it it's got a military voice shouting at me.

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

It's got really heavy metal music on it. You've just got to bust it out. And I'd go to this channel.

And now that I've learned that there are other channels with soft music and happy music, I am like – my body now just collapses like a puppet, where somebody just dropped all the strings. I'm like, "Okay, I've got to tune into this channel and my body is like, "Nope."

So, I've really been struggling this year with starting some creative energy, being like, "You've got to just bust this out." And then my body is like, "Nope, we are not doing that today."

Leah: When you tried to tune into the heavy metal you're going to force and grind channel, you're saying your body is just like, "No, we're not going to cooperate." It does that puppet collapsing on the floor."

Jennifer: Yep, like I lose all ability to think or do anything. And so, I was really frustrated at the beginning because I really thought that I – I guess looking back on the process I thought, wow I have no creativity. I'm trying to tune into my creativity channel and it's just dead air.

And then, I just don't even know how I discovered these new channels. But Anna Drew took me through an exercise to think about why am I collapsing? What is this energy that's blocking me? And I realized it was myself really just trying to protect myself. Like, I really don't want to be doing that anymore. I'm tired of that. And it's really not fun, you know, like a military voice yelling over heavy metal...

Leah: Right, no wonder you're collapsing.



## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

Jennifer: So, she took me through, like, I closed my eyes and I thought about what is this block trying to tell me? And I realized it wasn't a negative voice at all. It was actually a very small positive voice. And I pictured a little canary, like a canary in the coal mine that would just say, "I've been chirping to you for a while to tell you, you know, you have the ability to hear what your body and your emotions need. But you don't listen to me and I have to get louder and louder for you to hear me."

So, I got off the call. And I don't draw, but I was like, I'm going to try my best just to try to see – I had to do a canary. Like, I'm just going to do seven canaries in whatever style. I got a felt-tip marker, flare pen and some copy paper, and just started drawing canaries, whatever I thought they look like. I refused to look at one on the internet. I was like, I'm just going to draw. And I drew seven.

And then I fell in love with all of them. I felt a little bit like it was Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, where they all have their unique perspective and something that makes them seem a little off or is actually their strength. And so now, I looked up, what's a group of canaries? And it's an aria of canaries. And so, it made me start thinking about singing. Actually, I didn't think of it. You thought of it on the call. So, that led me to a different channel.

But that first channel, I felt like I wasn't judging what I was creating. I felt like it was just coming to me. I felt like it came alive. I felt like it was speaking my truth of what was inside me. I had never experienced this before. And then, I felt comfortable sharing it with people and I hope to have something set up for people that you can download your favorite canary so that you can also share. I feel very open about sharing it with no self-consciousness. I'd never felt like that before. I've felt like I have to be

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

either an imposter or make excuses to kind of dumb it down. So, I discovered this whole new channel of working. It was an amazing feeling.

Leah: Than you for sharing that. And that entire arc of the story, it's something to hear at this part, where we saw how many of the pieces came together, and I also then have a renewed appreciation for being in the story at the time. And this is for anyone listening, of being in your story at the time when you can't see the whole arc and how it fits together. But if you can be in those moments, like you've described, where you find a renewed trust in yourself, you're led to a place through unexpected means, the part of the story you shared about Anna Drew leading you through the meditation. Because was she doing one of the – we had an additional masterclass coaching session?

Jennifer: Yes.

Leah: Yeah, so we introduced some additional things in the Art School this last fall and Anna was one of our guest teachers. And being open, as you were, to other experiences, and then this work that – we can definitely do mindset work and business work. And then there's also this aspect that I love about the people that come to the Art School, where they're open to exploring other avenues, including inner imagery, imagistic work.

Because that canary for you, the tiny canary had a gigantic, tremendous message and not just one. But it is also not only symbolic of a relationship with yourself, but like an actual reestablishing of a relationship with a part of yourself. And then how that story continued to unfold.

Because when you were telling me, "In the class with Anna I did this guided meditation and I met these canaries and it had such a profound effect on me and I haven't felt this way," and I couldn't stop thinking about the canary

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

after our calla and thinking I think it's also literal. What does a canary do? A canary sings. And so, I asked, so what about singing? And you were like, "I actually looked up, what is a flock of canaries? And it's an aria." And then you told me that you had actually been a vocal major. I remember that. But you hadn't sang for years.

Jennifer: Yeah, I actually majored in math and music and was a vocal performance major. And I was in the choir, St. Olaf Choir. And at the time, it really felt like – I don't even know how to describe it, except for the movie Whiplash, where there's a drummer who joins a band and the director is God, and we couldn't miss any practices. You didn't want to screw up. I mean, it was a beautiful experience. But the negative side was that it's so intense that we had to get flu shots. We practiced an hour and a half every single day.

And a choir is really about blending and not actually sharing your own voice and getting yelled at a lot. Early directors were like, "Jennifer, what are you doing right now?" And I'm like, "Getting into it." She's like, "No, a choir you're all supposed to be blending." And I had to sing onstage and I was terrified for – just to complete my degree. And since then, I was in a couple other choirs, but I just took it so seriously. It just felt like I couldn't live up to the expectations of this choir. And I also felt like it was me reading music and trying to be a robot rather than expressing my own voice.

So, I've lived with this story that I'm terrified to sing, and I've even felt like I've even lost my voice. Literally, if somebody was like, "You have to sing right now," I wouldn't even be able to create a sound. And so, one of the techniques you bring up is to say, what would it feel like in a year if I got over my fear of singing? So, I really sat in that. And I was like, do I really care if I'm technically perfect? No.

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

The reason why I want to sing is I just enjoy the act of singing so much. What if at the end of one year you just enjoyed singing? It's not even technically perfect, like just enjoyed it. That's the one measure of my success. And suddenly, just thinking about that, I was like, it's Friday. I'm going to order some music. I'm going to practice for one hour on my keyboard. I dusted off my keyboard and practiced for an hour and then I'm going to just express my joy singing on a Friday night.

I even announced it so that I didn't back up. I said, "I'm going to spend the next hour practicing. And in one hour, you're going to hear me sing live." And I loved it. I just had so much fun. I felt like I was singing from my heart. And I was like, "Is it really that easy just to get rid of a phobia of 20 years just like that?" But apparently it is. And it was like, I just tuned into one of those radio channels that I was like, I'm singing from my heart and it's easy and I don't care what people think because I'm just having so much fun.

Leah: You know, you said a few very profound things there, like the tuning into the radio channel. Because another way of describing that is like having a new possibility, right? And if you think about the neuroscience, the neuroscience of things is helpful for people too, having a new neural pathway. If you don't have a neural pathway laid in your brain, you don't have a possibility. So, to have a vision in front of you of what's possible then helps the brain start to lay a new neural pathway for your energy and attention to travel down along.

And so, those new radio channels are like new neural pathways. Like, oh there's one over here where I can create but from force and grind and pressure and stress, making myself sick. Oh, like joy and love and ease, and oh by the way it actually is fruitful too because here I am doing the things and enjoying it. So, you did that work, allowing there to be new radio channels, putting yourself in a position too where you're exposed to new

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

music, to new radio channels. And then what you just said about – this was so good – about a phobia of 20 years, can it really just be that easy? Because that's really interesting because having a phobia for 20 years about doing something you love is not easy. It's hard, right?

And so, we think – it's so interesting that the brain is like, "Can I really put down this terribly hard thing and embrace joy?" Clearly you can because you are. And I also want to acknowledge and celebrate the fact that, like the way that you showed up to unravel and untangle some of the places in your brain that were like, "No, I think I'll just tune into the heavy metal, that's the way I get things done." Because that was one of the things I remember we worked on quite a bit early on and that you brought up early on, was that you had had that instance where you really overworked and you had viral meningitis. And that was really that fear of that happening again was really dominant, right?

So, can you describe, for anyone listening who's like, "Well, my fear is harder to get over..." that was big work that you did there and heavy lifting. And from my end, what seemed to work for you is the fact that you were open-minded, you thought things through. I mean, you came to begin with. You could have heard your friend, who is my client, on the beach in Mexico and been like, "That's hogwash. That's not for me." But something in you, you followed the call.

So, when you followed that call, do you remember, was there also simultaneously negative backtalk or was there just a call or what was that process of beginning to tune into those new radio signals like for you?

Jennifer: I think one of the most powerful tools – I might say this multiple times on different tools. But this one I really love is being her now, really thinking about the future. So, I think for probably 10 years at least 've had

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

this plan to get over my phobia of singing. And it went something like this, where I'd be – I actually joined a ladies' rock camp for a weekend to play drums. I always wanted to play drums. And I was like, one day I'm just going to be the singer in the rock band.

It was so fun. These musicians take care of you and you form a band at the beginning of the weekend and you perform at the end. And they just love you to death. I was like, this is so fun. So, it's like, okay to get to that place, what do I need to do?

So first, I'm going to listen to music to identify my style. Then I'm going to engage a singer who's going to help coach me on technique. So, I feel like if I have enough technique, then I'm going to be more comfortable singing. Then I'll start – I actually downloaded Ableton Live. So, I thought I don't have enough courage to sing in public, so I'm going to record myself. So, I actually started looking into music editing classes. And all of these classes are so expensive that I was like, I don't think I can afford this right now. But it probably was like a five-year path to get rid of my phobia. So, I'll record it and then release in on albums, and then maybe I think – who's the lead singer of the Doors, who had to sing backwards...

Leah: Yes. Oh no...

Jennifer: It will come to me later.

Leah: It will.

Jennifer: I was picturing that or Karen Carpenter, who played the drums and sang. So, I was like, that's going to be a year or two...

Leah: This is a long process layout.

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

Jennifer: And this was my analysis of how to get rid of this phobia. So, you're like, alright let's just skip all those steps. What do you want to feel at the end? I just wanted to have a mic and I want to just sing into it. I don't want to care about being technically perfect. So, I think that technique of jumping to the end and trying to feel it is just to be like – I just want to have a mic and have fun.

And I was like, well I don't need a \$2000 budget to do that. I bought a mic that I haven't used. I have a keyboard from 1980. And I have Instagram live. I actually could do that tomorrow. And I think just releasing all of that intellectual side and just feeling it from the heart, being like this is where I want to end up, I just got rid of that five-year plan to get rid of my phobia and did it in a day. If I can't describe – other than just skipping to the end and doing it now. That's really powerful for me.

Leah: I think you described it beautifully too, skipping the intellectual pathway that's very circuitous. But I think that is one of my favorite tools too, the be her now, because it's teaching your body what it would be like, laying a new pathway of possibility and then not just intellectualizing, but know, what would it be like to be her in mind too, but also body and spirit? And then realizing, going back to your radio analogy, you can also tune into energies that you can experience in your body, and then your body kind of takes the lead. And there's this intelligence in our bodies and in our unconscious. It's operating on levels and I think so much faster than sometimes that intellectual mind, it just doesn't even know what happened.

Jennifer: And I'm actually trying to find the channel right now for my dreams at night. I live alone and one of the things I miss about life, being in quarantine, is adventure and travel and the serendipity of running into people that I've met. So, my mind has taken over and at night – I would not believe this if I didn't write it down in my journal in the morning...



## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

--

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. So, one of the things you heard Jennifer mention was this idea of the radio channel, that metaphor. And I want you to think about that in your own life. What are the channels that you usually dial into in order to create? Are they serving you? How have they served you? They must if you have been using them, right? So honoring that, acknowledging that. And then also giving yourself the opportunity to widen your perspective and play with this idea of radio channels. What are some different channels that you can try out?

Perhaps you have been in the camp where you've dialed into that heavy metal, perhaps self-abusive, forcing, grinding, hard on yourself channel in order to get things done, and that did serve you. But now, you're ready and you're open and you're willing to dial in another station.

And what might that be? And I want to point out here that perhaps why dialing into a station that feels like more kindness, you might think that you are dialing down on the quality of your work, the integrity of your work, or your expectations for the results and the lifestyle that you can create. And that is not at all it.

This is about dialing in the channel that you want. This is about, again, going back to the beginning of this episode, you declaring who you are, what you are about, and what you are creating.

So, I also want to invite you to take that into consideration when thinking about this channel exercise. As someone who is prolific, who is a creative

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

genius, what channels are you allowed to access that perhaps you don't give yourself permission to dial in when you're thinking less of yourself?

So first, think about that self-concept. Think about that aspect as someone who is a creative force of nature a creative powerhouse, successful, prolific, amazing, perhaps there is a next level with your name on it. Maybe you've been a professional writer but now you want to go to that next level, whatever that is for you.

In this exercise, using your imagination to put your name on that next level, and from that next level, what channels would you be able to dial in? For instance, I love to think about, you know, I dial in a channel of ease, but I am also accessing a more engaged level of work and focus than ever before.

So, for me, when I say ease, I don't envision myself just kicking up, watching Netflix, I can't really see myself enjoying too much of kicking my feet up on the couch. I do like it sometimes. Anyway, I digress.

What I envision is I really focus in and I find ways of accessing flow, where I enjoy working and being engaged and then I also am experiencing new levels of freedom and liberation from any remaining self-doubt or fear or ways that I filter myself and hold back.

So, think about what this might be for you. What channels do you want to play around with and dial in? I will share again too one that I am dialing up this year is fun, is pleasure, is being able to say at the end of this year, "That was an amazingly successful year and that was my most pleasurable year yet. It was one of the most powerful years for me. And it was one of the most enjoyable years for me."

## Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly

So, that is one of the channels that I am dialing in. But what about you? I would love to hear. So, if you have answers to this, and when you do this exercise, please reach out and let me know.

Thank you for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you've enjoyed this podcast, if these episodes have been useful, meaningful to you, the best thing you can do to pay it forward is to go to iTunes and leave a review or is to share.

You know how I say in the coach with me segment to take this information and not just listen to it, but implement it in your life and make it transformational? I do really believe that one of the ways to transform not only the world, because it does when you share information that's useful and relevant to someone else, that inspires and uplifts them, it transforms their world. And in this magical, reciprocal way, sharing it also transforms the sharer.

So, thank you for helping me change this paradigm from struggling and poor, you know, tortured creatives and artists into one of thriving, flourishing artists. And the more that we do that individually and also support the efforts of other to rise, the more we all rise. This is not a zero-sum game. This is really the new paradigm is the collective paradigm, where the rising tide lifts all ships.

And again, I am so grateful for all of you out there being ships, but then also being a part of this rising energy, this movement, this awakening, this rising tide. Thank you.

And when you are ready to jump in and swim with us in the deep end in the Art School, the water is great in here. We would love to have you. Our next class starts March 2<sup>nd</sup>, so just a couple weeks away from when I'm

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

## **Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly**

recording this. And that runs for 12 weeks. And then the next class after that won't happen until the fall, so we'll have a break.

Also, many of the Art School students opt to repeat because they find that the community, the coaching, the program, the curriculum becomes such an integral part of their thriving life and their creative process that it is beyond worth it to come back.

And as you have heard me say before, that is absolutely my aim. My aim is that this is at least worth 10 times your investment and that this is one of the best investments that you ever make for yourself, for your creativity, your life, your dreams, and also completely my dream and my intent that by helping you live a very full fulfilling life, that that helps your goodness and your gifts rise and spread out and flow out to those in your life and possibly those that you might not ever meet.

So, if the Art School has been calling you, I would love to have you in this next class. I hope to see you in class March 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you have any questions, you can email us, [support@leahcb.com](mailto:support@leahcb.com) and we will be happy to take care of you. And if there's time, we're also happy to set up an exploratory call and discuss over Zoom any questions you might have.

The last thing I will say is the Art School is amazing if you have a current creative project in mind, and also amazing if you have some really big dreams that are, in your mind, you know they're realistically three to five years out. Now is the time to nurture those and get support. Getting that support now, planting that seed, finding the right kind of coaching and community and forward movement for that dream project is crucial right now and it's the difference between having that project timeline be three to five years out, if you get support now, versus seven to 10 years out, or 10 to 15.

## **Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly**

So, if you, again, have an immediate project, this is the place to be. And also if some of your projects and dreams have a bigger time horizon, a year from now, you will be so glad that you started when you did in just a couple of weeks and didn't wait. You will not regret it.

So, to close today, I wanted to draw upon another theme that was prevalent in this conversation with Jennifer Sly. And that was the theme, the importance of an open heart. And I know that to be more than just a pretty sentiment and more than a metaphor. I've touched on it a few times in stories that I have shared in this podcast, including the story about my experience doing the horse whispering Equus coaching work.

And those that are in Art School or have been in my mastermind have heard me talk more about this practice; physical embodied spiritual mental holistic practice of creating from an open heart. So, I want you to consider that the open heart isn't just a metaphor. It isn't just a concept or a thought. It is an actual way of being from which to create and from which to create powerfully, not only art, but changes and experiences in your life.

Once you open your heart, you will experience yourself as a changed person and then therefore you will see radical changes in what you are able to create in the world. And then also what seems to just happen in your world, that doesn't look like a direct result of anything that you've done, per se, but it's because you have done that heart-opening work.

So, along those lines, I wanted to share these words from R.M. Drake, who is a really fascinating character, if you want to Google him, "I don't know much about this world, but I do know one thing. When people open their hearts, they find the courage to do remarkable things. So, keep your heart open. I wouldn't worry about anything else."

## **Ep #120: (Part 1) Dialing Into New Channels with Jennifer Sly**

I hope your beautiful big hearts are doing well, dear listeners, that they are warm and open and filled with love, from you and from others. Have a beautiful week, everyone. And I will look forward to talking with you next time.