

## Ep #124: How to Do It Your Way



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Leah Badertscher**

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

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You know that iconic song, My Way by Frank Sinatra, that ends, “Let the record show I took all the blows, and did it my way.” There’s a reason we need an iconic song like that, that celebrates what the process is actually like of doing it your way.

Because without channeling the energy that is, I think, the heroic and celebratory energy that we admire in a song like that, you could get into the middle and just get stuck and forget about the purpose. You could forget about the dream that initially inspired you. You could forget about the sense of nobility you felt in taking on a courageous dream.

And as Frank said, “There were times, I’m sure you know, when I bit off more than I could chew.” But then he says, “But then through it all, when there was doubt, I ate it up and spit it out. I stood tall and I did it my way.”

So, this particular episode is just a very frank and personal episode about this particular snapshot in time for me, what it’s like to do it my way. And sharing not just as a gratuitous share, but because I hope it inspires and empowers you to know that this is a very real process and it is not a clean process and it is not a linear process. And yet, it can also be a beautiful process, a meaningful process, and absolutely one that you can undertake and continue through all the way to completion, all the way, doing it your way until you fully realize that dream.

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.

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Hello everyone, and welcome back to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. I am so glad you're here. So glad you're here listening. And I would really prefer it if you could just be here in person.

I love being around my family. They count as real people and in-person for sure. And I also, for being an introvert, am quite astonished to discover how much I am really craving in-person interaction. Like, a lot of it. And I really have a new appreciation for, while I am an introvert, that I also have this side that really thrives and is fed by working with others directly. And I am so grateful for technologies like Zoom, which allow the Art School to happen, the mastermind to happen, group calls. Because those are life-giving.

And it just reaffirms for me something that was not clear to me years ago when I started out on this path to be an artist. I really thought I was going to be a lone wolf. I really thought that was more the path of an artist. I have since, thankfully, been disabused of that bad idea and feel that this is more akin to the emergence theory in biology, where we all really are interconnected.

And I might create my own art and do my own work in my own way, but I really know, for me, the reality of feeling connected to something bigger and then having that very real manifestation in working with clients and seeing that although the work, the art that they're creating is very different from my own. Still, this uncanny feeling of connection and what we're doing to nourish and serve our own souls and our own creativity in our own life definitely feeds back into the whole and then ripples out.

And so, it might seem like I'm talking about two opposite or contradictory things in today's episode. Because as I started in the intro with a quote from the Sinatra song, "I did it my way," that could sound very individualistic

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and like you are not a part of a community. But that's actually not what I mean at all.

For me, part of my way is doing it in community. But it has also been this path of – I've been a part of many communities and now also a part of creating one of my own and this other paradigm of my own and very blessed by sharing orbits, the people that I do share this orbit with, also a way that in my eyes doing it my way and being in community, I'm talking about the same thing, is because for me to do it my way in terms of being creative, whether that is through the coaching work, teaching that I do, or through my own creative work, I very much feel like it's a collaboration and in conversation and not in some vacuum or bubble apart from the rest of the world or what other people are doing, but I'm very much alive at this time and around these people for a certain reason.

So, of course, part of the work of creating the art of my life is it's happening in the context with these other people in the world at this time too. And so, I really love thinking of this as a collaborative process and as a conversation. And that being said too, maybe you've also heard the phrase, "If you can't see it, you can't become it."

So, there are definitely times, while I don't feel like I'm doing this all on my lonesome, I do feel like I'm doing something or a combination of things that I can't look to one persona and say that that's the track that I'm going to follow, that's the blueprint, that's the template.

And if you've been listening to me for a while, you know then, I access my own vision and my own imagination. And I do look to the lives of others and character traits and their biographies and what they have created and how they did it and who they became and what they overcame and just the triumph of their human spirit and how they moved through similar challenges.

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So, there is that. And then there's also times, which brings me back to saying, another reason I would like to have you just be able to transport right into my house, into my studio office right now is that I could just show you what being in the thick of creating something, that's totally new so far as I know, is like. And that it isn't just this overly romanticized clean, clear, linear process.

And also, I wanted to share that because it took me some years to arrive at a point where I felt comfortable saying that, where I didn't feel like, "Gosh, I must be doing something wrong. Bad life coach. Bad artist. Bad mentor and teacher if it's not this clean, clear, linear, have it all together all the time already wrapped up in a neat tidy bow process."

And I know logically, rationally, we'd all say, of course not, right, human. But I do think we can be sold this bill of goods that in order to be on the right track, everything must already be preassembled. It's nonsense, I know, but I do think we buy into that trap.

And I think particularly when you are leading a group of people, you can fall into this place where it's like you have to be perfect, I guess is the word, and if you're not then you're failing. And I just don't subscribe to that at all.

And something that has emerged to me that, thanks also to the mirroring of friends and loved ones I've been able to see more clearly in myself. Something that I thought I saw in myself and it's something that I know I teach to my clients is the importance of not discounting yourself, your gifts, or your strengths. Because as I tell my clients, if you discount that, your past achievements, your strengths, what you've been through, what you have to offer, your dream, your potential, that discount shows up in the results that you're able to create.

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So, it's really important to not put yourself on discount by doing that. But it's come to my attention that even though I thought I didn't do that anymore, I didn't do that discounting of myself thing anymore, it's come to my attention that I still sometimes do.

And it's actually good news because now that it's been pointed out to me, I can see then where it, yes, creates discounts in my own results and discounts my own efforts, which then flows downhill to discounted or diluted impact or results. And one – again, going back to why I wish you could be here right now, something that was pointed out to me was that I can have a tendency to downplay hard or challenging things that I'm doing. I don't do it consciously, but I think – well I know since I've been thinking about this, not I think.

I know the thought process is that of course people understand the level of effort this takes or the work this takes. So, I don't need to talk about that because to talk about that would be dramatic. It would be like melodramatic. And why talk about that when everybody knows that?

So, again, the feedback I've received is maybe I'm making it appear as if things are way easier than they are. Which is interesting feedback because I want to be transparent and I also, I want to give myself credit for the heavy lifting that I do. And I also don't want to be accused of just over-romanticizing things because I choose to have a strong viewpoint about what I'm capable of and what other people are capable of. And that's not underestimating the hard work that's to be done is just saying yes, and then we will also do the hard work.

So, a specific example is the amount of work that it has required for me to build a multiple six-figure coaching practice art business while also being the kind of mother and wife that I want to be while also honoring my other loves in life, health and fitness and family and friends and music and nature

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and reading, in general also trying to carve out this path, which goes back to what I was saying about if you can't see it, it's hard to become it. Carving out this path of somebody who is multi-passionate and multi-thriving then too.

I don't want to be a multi-passionate and broke, you know, a multi-passionate and then my family suffers or my relationships suffer. And I think there are people that exist in the world – we call them polymaths. And it sounds really arrogant to call one's self a polymath. But I heard someone else refer to a man the other day as a polymath and talk about what a kind and generous human being he was, a beautiful human being in the world as well. And thinking about so many instances in my own life as I've tried to carve my own way, make my own way. Making room for these multiple obsessions that I have and loves and appreciations.

And how many times I encountered people saying, "You are way too scattered. You need to focus. You need to be single-minded." But I know from experience, trying to be single-minded is just the fastest surest way to cut me down.

It's very different than being focused and essential, like in the essentialism, that book, that drive and that theme. So, I'm creating this life without having any one particular person to look to who has done it or done it well. And meanwhile, you have a lot of feedback that it just can't be done. And that fuels me too. I just refuse to believe that.

I think too, carving my own path when, as an artist, my art, my expression would look differently than different schools of art. Same goes for poetry. And while I have so much respect for every tradition that I have encountered and have learned so much, I also have still felt like there is something else, like a different thing that I am carving through, this universal theme.

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I'm looking for a unified theme that explains all these things and I find out a little bit more through science, through poetry, through art, through positive psychology, through spirituality, through mysticism, through math, through music. And these universal themes are something expressed and I encounter in a completely different way and learn in a completely different way, including through money and the entrepreneurial path.

So, I guess what I really want to say to you today, why I wish you could be here right now is because my office and studio today is a mess. It's a mess. It's a mess. It's like creative chaos everywhere. And I am not beating myself up about that. I have a vision for where I am going with this space. Which is also a representation and a metaphor for my process and my bigger dreams in life too.

So, recently – this is a fun story – I had a meeting with Nate Berkus, the interior decorator, Oprah's Nate Berkus. And it was so lovely. He is on the app Intro, which a friend told me about. And long story short, I signed up for a session with him because I wanted some insights into creating my external creative ecosystem here at home while I'm still designing and planning for my dream studio out back.

I wanted a space in the interim that is a space for my moonshot self, for my \$2 million a year coach, writer, artist, entrepreneur, mentor, leader self. And I very much believe in your environment and design being an outer manifestation of inner workings and that back and forth conversation between the inner world, inner ecosystem, and the outer.

So, I found out about Nate Berkus being on Intro, I'm like, yes this is a sign, the way it came about, long story, I'm going to do that. I had a session with him. And by the way, I always thought he was adorable, but it turns out he's hot. So, that's just a little sidenote.



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And he was so lovely and so helpful and really had some great suggestions and got my vision for it. So, that's coming. But in the meantime, my office is still a mess. It doesn't look anything like the plans that we talked about. I had a meeting with him two weeks ago. And I've got some things to put in process.

My novel is lying in the first draft form. And then there's piles of other notebooks and sticky notes in top of it for things I've added and things that I want to rework. And I'm still trying to figure out now what space is required this year to finish that.

I have paintings in various stages of completion. I have paints across my table, notebooks, so a lot of things that feel in process, a lot of things that a part of me wants to just wrap up and have done with already so we can prove that it's done. And instead, I'm reminding myself that this is the life, this is part of the life and this is part of the process and also acknowledging for myself the heavy lifting it takes to take care of my mindset, to direct and be the leader of my emotional life, of my psyche, and to never again return to overwhelm and confusion and to be able to hang out in the thick of it and the thick of the chaos and the thick of some things working brilliantly, some things not working at all how I had planned, and going to plans D, E, and F, meanwhile keeping track of that commitment to the ultimate dream the ultimate intention that's decided and really working to walk my own walk and wanting to acknowledge that that does take energy and strength.

And that also means days like today, you might think life coaches always have tons of energy and are on top of the world. Today, I can't seem to get my neurons to fire. Just synapses are rolling slow and creaky today. And meanwhile, I also have calls. I have meetings. This podcast to complete. Things to put in motion, to finish up. And so, I wanted to just to drop you down into what being in the thick of it and being in the chaos of it is like. And to also let you know that what I'm really working on today is allowing

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myself to rest deep in that seat of my soul, on that sacred ground where I'm deeply okay. And that this is where I choose to be and choosing to trust the process and taking care of things while also surrendering and not feeling totally in control, even of my energy at the moment.

And so, again, I wanted to share because I know I've said before, you can absolutely create your big dreams and not need to be at 110% every day. You don't need to have it all together and bring you're a-plus game or even your B-plus game. It is sometimes just showing up. And not just sometimes. I think it is especially these times of showing up when you don't feel like you're on top of your game and you can't quite put your finger on why and things aren't coming together yet. You can have the vision and yet things just aren't coming together yet.

And yet, allowing yourself to relax and trust that that's where you're moving, even on days where it feels off, one thing that's really helped me is this idea of creating a sacred container for myself, and one of the ways I do that is with commitment. So, even on days like today where I just really am feeling off and not on top of it, trusting in the strength of the powerful intention and commitment that I've made.

And once I've done that and remind myself of that, it reorients me to thinking about days like today and about, wow, this seems like this is happening to me and slowing me down, or is an obstacle to my process. And instead, since I have already decided that that ultimate intention is what's most powerful and creative, then I can think instead about what's happening here. What's moving beneath the surface for me here? Why this low energy? What could be happening? What am I being asked to slow down and look at things differently? How is this happening for me?

It helps me to do that. It also helps me to slow down and reassess all the strength that I have created and all the momentum that I have created and

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that I have put in motion, and to look at what I have put I motion as a copartner to myself in this creative process that I have been building and building and building something.

And things are in play and other people are in play and to remember that. So, sometimes you're waiting back on your side of the net for things to get hit back to you and that can be what's going on too. And again, I'm also choosing to use a time like this to acknowledge the strength that I have built that perhaps I have also been discounting.

And someone that reminded me of this recently was my dad. I'll get choked up telling – sorry. So, my dad likes to tell this story. And until recently, it didn't really dawn on me why he likes to tell this story. I just thought it was mildly annoying and embarrassing. But my dad is known for being a story teller. And most of us who know him well have heard lots of these stories over and over again.

But occasionally, someone wanders into our orbit who hasn't heard every single one of his stories and we're like, "Oh boy, fresh meat." And so, sometimes, especially if it's someone who knows me, he likes to tell them this story. And I'm always like, "Gosh, dad." On a few different levels, I felt like it was embarrassing and I was like, "Please, let's not tell that story." But here we go. I am going to actually tell you that story. How ironic is that?

So, it's actually a story that first one of his farming colleagues and friends had told him. And it occurred in the summer of 1997. I was 18 I had just been crowned the state fair queen, which is not a story I have shared before for fear it would cancel out my feminist subscription. And then, I have just decided nothing can. I get to decide that. That was really a beautiful experience for me. And it's part of this story too. But only a part of it.

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So, how that happens, there are 99 counties in Iowa. Each has a queen candidate. This is the abridged version. Sends their queen candidate to the state fair for a few days and you have a series of interviews and essays and a speech that you give. It is not a beauty pageant and there is just – it's actually a really fun few days it was a beautiful experience.

And on Friday afternoon, I was crowned, quote unquote crowned the state fair queen, and was super-stoked. And so, that night we drove back home to our farm in Northern Iowa. It's two and a half hours. And then you pack, and the next day the plan is that you go back to the state fair for the next week. And the state fair queen is like an ambassador and you participate in all sorts of activities during that week and there is a really fantastic scholarship, which is also part of my excitement about it.

So, I went back home and the next morning though, because my siblings and I always had this chicken raising business as our entrepreneurial venture. Growing up, we didn't have an allowance. Our parents agreed that they would subsidize the food and that sort of thing, some of the costs, if we did all of the work of caring for the animals and the business also of selling the animals and everything in between. So, that way, we learned some business skills, entrepreneurial skills, and also just the responsibility that it takes to care for – usually we had about 200-plus chickens at a time. Then we had a customer list. These were chickens for eating, not laying hens.

So that next Saturday morning, I was scheduled to take the chickens in because they were full grown. And my brother, who would have ordinarily helped me, I think he was away at a football camp or something like that, so I was going to have to catch – I had to catch 110 chickens on my own. And you get up at five in the morning and there are these crates. And so, I caught these 110 chickens and then drove them down to a town south of us. I used my dad's pickup. And then had to unload them.

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And this is a really dirty job process because when you put chickens in crates and you're stacking the crates on top of each other – and my apologies to any of my vegan or vegetarian friends out there. You know, this is like the world that I grew up in and I understood where food came from and I understood – it was a rich background to have. And I understand too if it's not something that sits well with everyone.

So, the crates stack up. And then they're high above your head. And so, they're heavy because they're full of chickens too. So, I look back and I think, gosh, I was a super-scrawny kid and these were really heavy. And meanwhile, you're lifting these crates up above our head. And as you're doing this, there's just all sorts of chicken manure, chicken shit running down your arms, in your face. And in unfortunate times, it gets in your hair, runs down your shirt. It is just a dirty, hard job.

And you're lifting these crates up and down and you have to unload the chickens too. And it's just this part of the process. So, this is what I was doing.

Meanwhile, I did not know this, one of my dad's friends or acquaintances had been driving by and happened to see me. And he was the one that related this story to my dad. Because he, as farmers do, he had seen my dad later uptown at coffee, where the farmers gathered for morning coffee. And he was like, "Oh my gosh, it just made my day to see the state fair queen with chicken shit running down her arms and down her face and in her hair." He's like, "That just does a heart good." And my dad was very proud too.

So, that's the story that he likes to tell, of this farmer friend of his finding him uptown at coffee to tell him how happy it made him to see the state fair queen covered in chicken shit early in the morning, and this skinny girl unloading these big heavy crates.

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So, that was a story I actually hadn't intended to tell when I started recording this podcast today. But in between a few calls, including the Art School calls where these themes always emerge, I feel like the theme that is emerging, the story that wants to be told is that you can be both the queen and do the dirty job and you can be both the queen and be totally covered in shit and it does not mean that you are not still the queen. And in fact, maybe just contributes to your shine and the knowing of your inner strength.

Because you might be mucking about in your own messy middle, doing your own heavy lifting, dirty job, and it might not feel like the fairytale that you had planned. But take some enjoyment from your own story, from your own strength, acknowledge your own strength. Don't discount that and relish your own story, including the fact that you are someone who is not afraid to get dirty and do some heavy lifting. Take heart from the fact that you have the courage to be on this journey. You are in the arena, as Brené Brown says.

And remember that when you're moving through these times when it feels like it can really easy to feel like because you aren't a bright shining perfect human being, having all things together tied up in a bow 100% of the time, that you are somehow not fit or not cut out or doing something wrong when it's just the opposite is the case. You're so strong and you are so meant for this. And your story is an amazing story. And not in spite of the dirty shitty parts. Not in spite of the parts where you have to do heavy lifting.

It's an amazing story because of all of those aspects of you, because of all of the aspects of the story. So, this brings me to the part of the podcast where I want you to do more than just listen. I want you to lean in and really work with me, coach with me.

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So, today, I want to offer you your own reclamation of story process. Is there a part of the process – maybe it's what you are squarely in the middle of right now, that you can reclaim and own. We tend to want to hurry past or cut out the parts of the story or the process that we think don't make us strong, that it doesn't look like the story of somebody who is successful, somebody who wins out at the end of the day. But reconsider that.

What parts of your life or yourself or aspect are you trying to hurry over or hurry past? And how is that undermining your strength and your energy and your story. And how can you reclaim all aspects of you, coming from this place of you know you are deeply okay?

Because I think it's from that place where we really are able to settle back into that sense of our natural power, even on days when we're feeling lackluster and without energy, just to acknowledge that even then we are still deeply okay. And then, it liberates us to be human and to move forward and that we don't have to be bright and shiny all the time and have things all together. And yet still we can create.

I know that one of my biggest dreams for myself is to be able to be me, the same me that I am here at home as I am with my clients, to be the same me painting as I am speaking with you and writing, to be the same me while I'm sitting with my own doubts and fears and mental and emotional turmoil or drama and still be deeply okay and still feel like I don't owe anybody an explanation or a justification for why I'm here or what I have to offer.

And again, that's what I wanted to offer all of you today and that's what I want to offer with this coach with me exercise. To be so deeply okay with yourself that through the mess, through the chaos, through the highs and lows, whether you feel like you have your crown on or not, you still have this sense of belonging to the world. And from that place, I think new levels

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of creativity and gifts flow from us, but also to us. And we get to experience this peaceful way of being with ourselves. That's just part of the dream that I'd like to have for myself and I wanted to share in case that's part of what you were dreaming for, for your own beautiful life, messy parts included as well.

Thank you so much for listening to *The Art School Podcast*. If you have enjoyed this episode, if this has been useful, meaningful to you, the best thing you can do to pay it forward is to share, is to subscribe, and is to go to iTunes and leave a review. And when you're ready to take this work deeper, when you are ready to create a loving, creative revolution and a transformation in your own life and work, if there is a next level out there in the world but also in your heart and mind that you are so ready for, then you will want to join us for the Art School.

There, we will dive so much more deeply and explore many of these concepts within an extraordinary, generative, brilliant creative community. And you will also be able to receive coaching from me within that group coaching community where you bring your particular questions, challenges, ideas, and I will coach you and help you move your mind, your body, and spirit into that place where you can align with that next level, where you can cultivate the mind, body, and spirit that make those results that you're dreaming of inevitable.

So, to learn more, you can go to my website [www.leahcb.com](http://www.leahcb.com) and learn more about working with me either through the Art School or the Art School Mastermind. You can also schedule, and I would encourage you to do this, schedule an exploratory call with a member of my team by emailing [support@leahcb.com](mailto:support@leahcb.com) with "Exploratory Call" in the subject line.

This is not a sales call. It is simply there for you to be able to ask a real live amazing human being what the Art School is like, if it is a good fit for your

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goals and dreams. Because we want to make sure that the chemistry is there and we want to make sure that whatever it is that you want to create, this is the ideal creative ecosystem for that and that our values and our methodologies are aligned.

To close today, I just want to invite you to contemplate how embracing the chaos in the messy middle, embracing the non-linear of the creative process, embracing the shitty heavy lifting, really unglamorous parts, including the parts where your energy is low and you are feeling like anything but a bright shiny crown-wearing queen, how embracing this part actually will reinforce and edify you as a creative powerhouse.

Because I think our culture tends to teach us to embrace these visions or versions of success that really actually undermine and limit and curtail our innate power and potential. Because the unleashing of power and potential, it is going to be a messy chaotic process. And if we don't allow ourselves that, then we are also then disallowing ourselves this passage, this rite of passage and power, when we have this paradigm of having to always be good and never stray from being high-energy, shiny, brilliant, on-point, all-together, overdelivering all the time.

It actually curtails and limits, and I would say diminishes our ability just to be our full – and I'm going to use this word – authentic – even though I think that's overused. But to be out full natural selves, which is when we're going to find out what we are really capable of.

So, again, I just want to invite you to contemplate that. Is there a part of the process in your own creative process, on the way to goals or dreams, where it feels like you often get drug down? And is it your judgment of that and your judgment of yourself, is there a way you can look at your judgment of that aspect of the process and yourself in that process? And instead of saying, "Well, I have a hard time here, or this is messy, or this is

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chaotic, or this is a really difficult part for me,” and instead of that being something that then undermines your authority or the permission you’re willing to give yourself to step into authority, can you instead embrace that as something that actually builds and is foundational and is a reason for, a cause for being an even stronger authority and dominant creative energy and powerhouse in your own life?

I hope you all have a really good week. And even if there are things, and many things in your world, that seem not okay at all and like you don’t have it together, please know that you still get to be deeply okay. You are not broken. You are not in need of fixing. You are deeply okay. You still get to move towards your dreams. You still get to cherish that day when you will live into the dream. And in the meanwhile, I’m really happy that you’re here and that this gets to be a part of your world and your process. Thank you for being a part of mine. Have a good week and I look forward to talking with you next time.