

Ep #169: Prolific AF: How to Do It



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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

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Prolific. Here's the definition Merriam-Webster Online provides, "Producing a large amount of something, as in an author who writes many books." Also, "Producing young or fruit, especially freely, as in fruitful. Causing abundant growth, generation, or reproduction. Marked by abundant inventiveness or productivity."

Now, I don't want to just project or assume too many things about you, the listener, this listening audience. But I think it's safe to assume that you're creative, or at least that you know that you can be and you want to be. And I have not met too many creatives who don't also desire to be prolific.

I know I do, both as a way of meeting – actually both of my sacred twin intentions. So, for me, sacred twin intentions is a process goal and a results goal, an external results goal. I want to be prolific in that I want that feeling of creating freely, of generating abundantly, of being extremely inventive.

To me, that signifies that I am in love with my process and I have let go of a lot of my inhibitions and hang ups and I'm just flowing. And I also love the result of having been prolific. It doesn't mean that everything turns out, but it also means your likelihood of things turning out increases. And I also believe in the concept that I've talked about in earlier podcasts of horizontal revision, that our inner artist, our inner genius is always revising and learning as we go, as we create because it's what we're meant for.

So, when I heard from my mastermind mentor several months ago when we first started, Laura Belgray – I'll talk about her later in the podcast – that our only assignment was to be prolific AF, I lit up. And so, in today's podcast, I want to share what happened for me when I heard that and how I took it from being just a nice thing to hear to something I actually ran with.

So, enjoy this podcast, Prolific AF: How to Do It.

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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*. So, I am fresh off of knee surgery, and thank you to those of you who sent wonderful messages and your healing energy and your thoughts and prayers and good intention. Please, keep them coming. You can address all of them to Leah's left knee, because they are for sure helping. So, I really appreciate it.

And in addition to just the healing process beginning, which is not a silver lining. That's the point. But another silver lining of the process was that my mom came out for a few days and it was so awesome. I got to spend time with her. We got to have coffee in the morning after the kids went to school. And then we got a ping-pong table that weekend and my mom is an epic ping-pong player and totally schooled the kids. And it was awesome to hear them laughing down in the basement with that ponging around.

And my mom is also – one of her love languages are creative projects. And she totally knocked a couple of projects I had on the backburner just out of the park and got them done this weekend for me, including the family photo gallery wall. And then, we went out to dinner at our favorite little mom-and-pop – except for it's actually just a little mom – Italian restaurant downtown on Saturday night.

So, yeah, it was so wonderful and I hope you, wherever you are, are also loving your life and whatever it brings to you, all of it, just because it's your life; knee surgeries and all of it, moms coming to help, friends sending wishes, clients sending you flowers – thank you. You know who you are.

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Speaking of clients, I am still vibrating after, like, so much energy after we had a mastermind, an Art School Mastermind call yesterday afternoon. And I was thinking it would be fun to give you an insight into the energy in these calls. And I was going to read some things from the chat. And then, I was cracking up as I pulled up the chat to read it.

I'm not going to tell you anyone's names. I'm going to leave out that information. But I saw things in here that I did not see yesterday were going on as I was coaching. And a lot of it would not make sense without a lot more context. But there are just things like – let me just see here – oh yes, “We are on a dream team together. Oh, my god, this is the best container.” A lot of yesses, “AMAZINGs,” in all caps and exclamation marks. I can't read all of these. Another one – this probably takes context but it was so good. Everyone was in the moment.

The coaching – if you've not experienced group coaching, it does feel like things are being activated, like when you really get to something and find breakthroughs for someone. And so, another comment was, “HOLY SPIRIT, ACTIVATE,” in all caps. Because it feels – you can feel the energy feels big and everyone can feel it, most of the time. It's not only the person being coached who feels it and receives the benefit of it, but particularly the people watching.

And I was reflecting on something I was so grateful for yesterday and just letting myself sit with it, that when other people get to witness another person really becoming clear, like dropping things that have weighed them down, made them small, untangling knotted spots in their mind, deciding, “Actually, things that were a problem don't need to be a problem,” and they're suddenly free, you can feel the power surge come through them.

It's like they step into their power, but that phrase, it's almost a little off because it's almost like you feel them activated with their own power. And it

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is not what people fear power to be; something threatening or to dominate or hurt others, or that it creates a scenario of winners and losers.

When you experience someone actually tapping into and flowing their own innate – who they just are – their spirit, it is powerful and it is also healing and uplifting for everyone who experiences it to see another human being just lit up, alive, and glowing like that. It is so far from threatening. It is the opposite of threatening or intimidation. You yourself feel uplifted and activated and healed.

Group coaching can be such an experience, proof that we are so much more connected than we think we are. And yesterday was a powerful example of that.

I saw then later in the Slack forum, someone wrote “Holy shit, what a call. Literally, pieces are dropping like candy from the sky from that call. I keep on thinking about it and then, oh my gosh, I don’t even have words to match it.”

So, a little bit of magic that’s going on behind the scenes there. And the specifics of what we’ve talked about, I am formulating into a podcast. Obviously, redacting personal information, but thinking about what have been some of the breakthroughs and some of the most powerful coaching that has been happening in the mastermind and how can I translate that to podcast form to share with you, and other forms?

So, one thing that I have planned and in the works is a workshop series coming up in March. I want to go through the fundamentals of what it takes to create your own creative breakthrough with your mind, with your spirit, with your creativity, with your energy, and really get into the brass tacks, really get into the skills that you need so that you can do this work on your own and also you can become so skilled at it that, when you bring

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something to coaching – let's say you join the Art School Mastermind or another coaching group, you're already starting from a different level and the coaching can be so much more advanced when you have these fundamentals, when you know the lay of the land and you've started to practice some of these skills on your own.

And so, that workshop will be coming up in March. Sign up for my newsletter, www.leahcb.com to stay in the loop for when that's going to be. Also, I have a bunch of art that I have been finishing up. I have been, like I said in the intro, prolific AF in all areas. And so, if you are interested in seeing what I've been working on behind the scenes, if you like creative process, if you like art, if you enjoy studio snapshots – because mine too, I love to share what my own coaching has been. It's always when I'm doing my own work that I have also these coaching breakthroughs and these great a-has of things I can then share and carry over to my clients and to you, to my listeners.

So, those are some of the fun things going on around here. I feel like there is one more thing that's really fun that I'm forgetting, but I'm sure it will come to me later. So, onto being prolific AF.

My assumption – and I know that this isn't a safe assumption because I've heard differently from some people – is that this is a totally desirable thing. And I know that's a thought. That's not a fact. But I have heard from some people that they've been told their prolific and it was meant as a slight, as someone dinging them in some way that perhaps if they were less prolific, that would signify, that would communicate that they care more, they have higher standards.

I am not of that school of thought. I love being prolific, in part because I haven't always been. But for me, prolific is on the other side of the spectrum from paralyzing perfectionism, from overthinking, from

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overcomplicating. To me, being prolific is being free, is creating freely and not constantly refining my work, not going through this loop – and this could be a podcast in itself – going through this loop where you have an inspiration because you are a font of ideas, and then you're like, "Oh, but then I've got to make it better. I've got to research this. I've got to package it this way."

And then, you start to have this backup, this block and your channel starts to get clogged and congested because there's all this pent-up creative energy that you're not letting out into the world because it's, quote unquote, not good enough. So, like I said, subject of upcoming podcast episodes.

But to me, prolific is on the other end of that. Prolific is moving towards a side of the spectrum where I'm free, where I am liking my work, liking who I am, liking how I do things. And then also, the paradox of, I just keep really liking being freely producing, even when my brain sometimes is like, "We're not liking our work. We're not liking how we do it." It's sensing into a bigger energy and trusting that just flowing is what's going to bring me life, and trusting into the flow so much more because it's a bigger energy than trusting these small thoughts that want to say, "Oh, but really, you should create some value there. If you respect your audience..."

It's basically perfectionism, dressed up in, quote unquote acceptable disguises, of being a good girl, of not offending anybody, of not hurting anybody, of taking yourself seriously. And it's all of those things, however, that I have found to be external conditioning, external systems of oppression telling creatives, humans, artists, particularly women how they need to be and what's acceptable. And then, we internalize that. And then, these become the way that we get in our own way. These become the way where we cooperate in our own oppression, in the oppression of our creative genius.

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And in order to know who we are, we need to flow it and get it out in the world to get that channel started. Albert Camus said, “One must assert themselves in order to know themselves.” And I’ve found that’s very true, particularly as an artist, the more I assert myself – which to me is very much aligned with being prolific, just allowing things to flow and not in a guarded, hiding way, not in an apologetic, qualifying way, but allowing it to flow, coming from an assertive energy, then the more I do know myself.

And then that kind of love and self-regard and trust that is not conditional on, quote unquote how good the work is, it is unconditional trust, it is unconditional love for yourself and for your creativity. It’s that where you get to know yourself. And then, the more you get to know yourself, it’s a feeling. It’s a solid feeling. And then, the more you get to trust yourself.

That trusting, knowing, trusting, knowing process snowballs in the best kind of way. It doesn’t mean that you have to make all of the thoughts go away, or even sometimes – not sometimes, a lot of times your energy is not there. That’s another sneaky one too, right, “I’m just not feeling like it. I’m just not in a good energy, so then I can’t create this.”

But instead, just to be like, “I can trust the flow and I can create, and I can let go of anything else. My only job here, my only business is to flow what’s here to flow.”

And so, I want to read to you something that I wrote to my email audience. So, some of you have read this and received this, but I heard from many of you that you love this particular email. And I thought it might be nice then to speak it as well. And I will likely also have additional color commentary. Here’s one version of the letter I sent.

In the subject line, I wrote, “Prolific AF: How to Do It,” and then I opened with: is this advice worth \$160,000? It is to me. Because I 10X anything I

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invest in. My investment to receive this advice was \$16,000. So, here's what happened. When one of Marie Forleo's besties and business partner, Laura Belgray – they cocreated the Copy Cure, and Laura Belgray who is one of my mentors also happens to be one of the OGs in the online copywriting world. And she said to me that my only assignment in her mastermind, to all of us in her mastermind, our only assignment was to be prolific AF. I took her dead seriously and have been running with it ever since.

It helps that I paid a nice chunk of change for her advice and to be in her orbit, AKA her mastermind, otherwise known as Shrimp Club. There's a long story behind that quirky genius name. There is a reason Laura is one of the best in the business. She's a genius. But I like to think I would have done it anyway. I mean, run with the prolific AF.

Because the moment I heard prolific AF, I had such a strong visceral and spiritual reaction. I recognized those were words I had been waiting to hear, but didn't know it until I heard it. I recognized them as a portal and a major invitation.

It might sound crazy, but even though she said thus during our very first call of a nine-month program – it was back in September – I felt like I got what I came for in that instant.

So, a little backstory for those of you who are like, "What the heck is a mastermind and why would you pay to be in one?" and you're asking this even though you're on my list, listening to my podcast, and so have likely heard me talk about my mastermind, the Art School Mastermind a time or two dozen.

And so, I'm not going to try to define masterminds here because there are so many variations. But I can share with you that one of my main reasons

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for joining masterminds – not the only, but one of them – is summed up by this quote from the late, great Jim Rohn, “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.”

Laura Belgray is incredibly prolific, a successful writer, doing creativity and business her own way. She’s also brilliant and hilarious. I knew she’d attract similar, high-vibing, loving to write, creative entrepreneurial souls. More than five people, for sure. And that just bumps up my creative genius, comedic, fun-loving, writing, money-making, impact-creating entrepreneurial average even more.

Recently, in the Facebook group for Shrimp Club, we were asked to share our biggest win in the group. I shared mine and then thought, in the spirit of continuing prolific AF for myself, in the spirit of being an example of it for my clients and my audience, and also offering the same invitation to you that has brought my own simmer to a boil, I thought I would read to you what I wrote to the members of this mastermind, of which I am also a member.

I want to first though back up and let you in on a secret to 10Xing anything; know yourself to be someone who spots a gem when they see it and can create infinite value, meaning, beauty from that gem for yourself and others by taking it into your own brain, your consciousness, your body, your mind, your creative spirit, making it your own and embodying it.

So, now let me read to you what was my own post in the Facebook group, and then there’s a question from a fellow member, and then I’ll share my follow up. So, here’s what I wrote.

Hello, Shrimpers. It was so great to see your faces on the call yesterday. Here is my biggest win. Well, two of them. First of all, the people, all of you and Laura. I was expecting brilliant, lovely people. And the fact that you’re

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all that and so funny and badass and helpful at the same time has been awesome.

Second, when Laura said early on that there were no real homework assignments other than to be prolific AF, that was like the thing I needed to hear that I didn't know I so wanted to hear. Prolific AF just felt like music to my creative soul and like a giant permission slip.

I began with writing just a little more, but a little has built into a lot. And not only in terms of how many emails I've written – and a third win, really enjoy writing my emails – or social media posts or podcasts. But it's also carried over to my own creative work as well, including painting. So, not only the written word.

I'd been sensing that there was a bottleneck somewhere in my creative flow, and hearing prolific AF and feeling myself respond with that, "Yes, that's what I want," was and has been so great. So, thank you, Laura, for the invitation and also being an amazing example, and thank all of you for being so inspiring and welcoming.

So, that's the end of what I wrote, to which one of my fellow masterminders responded, "I love your big wins. Have you found any tricks to help you be prolific AF? What did you shift to make prolific AF something that you are actually doing rather than just a nice thing to hear?"

And before you know my response, as I'm reading this aloud, I'm like, "I should have made tis into a kind of drinking game." You don't have to do tequila shots. You can just drink sips of your tea or out of your water bottle. And then we'll just see who needs to sprint to the bathroom first every time you hear me say prolific AF. But maybe subtly, it's a way of me just seeding your subconscious mind. I like to work with the subconscious mind. So, let's say it's that and not a drinking game.

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So, here is my answer to that question, about what did I do to make the shift to something I was actually doing, rather than just a nice thing to hear or think about?

I wrote: thank you, I think the most important shift was that I took it seriously how much a part of me responded to hearing prolific AF. It would be easy to dismiss it as, “Oh, of course, wouldn’t that be nice? Doesn’t everyone want that?” But I acknowledged that as something very important, sacred even, I realized that is something I do for my clients. Listen deeply. Don’t dismiss or overlook a thing, a micro-expression, a word choice, an energy change.

And so, in keeping with that, I did make a deliberate decision to double down on treating myself like my own best client. And I coached my own face off and got coaching for the places I suspected I had blind spots.

To sum up the coaching work I did, it was like a creativity audit for myself. I made a list of all the things, things that I could see right away are excuses, but also things to me that just seemed to be, quote unquote, reality or the rules of the game that were standing in the way of me and being prolific AF.

I began with a premise that there is no limitation that isn’t a self-imposed limitation, and that if I just know what they are, then I have a choice, to choose to limit myself by believing that thought, subscribing to it, or not.

And if I choose to limit myself, then I really better like the justification for that. I find places that are sticky for me, perfectionism, people pleasing, and then the prettily dressed-up clothes, those things called professionalism or, quote unquote, “You shouldn’t do that when you’re marketing, especially in a launch because this is when it counts.”

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So, I found those places, those sticky places for me, and then I work through those. When I say work through those, that is my shorthand for all of the coaching work I did on myself, which would be an extensive masterclass. But I'm giving you the abridged version here.

Here are words from Clarissa Pinkola Estes that I find really helped me during this process, "I love my creativity more than cooperating in my own creative oppression." And then it has been a simultaneous process of creating a lot more and noticing all these places where I am my own bottleneck, where I am damming, like you dam a river, and damning, from divinity or condemning, my own creativity.

So, I look for all these places where I'm damning my own creativity in both senses of the word. One of the specific things I do that may be easier to share in a scenario like this, in a communication like this, is that I give myself a quantity challenge. So, I wrote: do you know the story of the pottery students being broken into two groups, one being graded on the quality of pots, and the others on the weight of the clay they threw?

I feel like that's been brought up in this group, but I know I've mentioned it on a prior episode somewhere. And I think I first read about this in, maybe, there's a book called Art and Fear? I will look for that title so I can share that with you.

Anyway, like so many paintings, so many posts, so many emails, podcasts, poems, et cetera, that's my objective. The only objective is quantity and the only guidelines are that I'm using this as a method of cultivating a greater trust in myself, in my creativity, and constructing an intentional, loving, kind relationship with myself, my creativity, my mind, and my central nervous system.

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And so, as I'm reading this and it came up in a coaching session I did today as well, I'm noticing my own use of the word, "My." And just a bonus note for any of you listening, actually when I do my own work, I find it very helpful sometimes to remove that possessive pronoun, that my, to think of it as trusting something greater than me helps me immensely.

Because when I'm actually in the flow, I don't feel the need to possess what I'm doing. It actually feels like it gets in the way. It actually feels like it creates more self-consciousness than it liberates a flow of consciousness and just pure creativity.

But because I'm speaking English and in the western world, I'm using, like, my creativity. But also know that I also think of it as it's not mine. I can't point to it and own it. So, back to the letter I'm reading to you.

So, I watch my inner dialogue and energy closely, tend to my central nervous system, do all the things I do with clients to cultivate an inner habitat, an inner ecosystem that is very hospitable for their ideas and creativity and goals to flourish, thrive, and grow.

So, another way that I talk about this is cultivating this inner habitat, this inner ecosystem, which is your mind, body, and spirit, so that it's very hospitable for your soul, for the truth of who you are.

So, this kind of inner habitat also becomes, by virtue of this work, very inhospitable and intolerant of anything which is a pollutant or anything which would oppress it or be a toxin and limit the vitality.

I've done this process several times over the last 15 years. But hearing prolific AF and also seeing Laura Belgray's example of being herself, making bank, having fun while playing by her own rules, smacked to me of kismet and a major invitation to do it again at another level.

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So, that's the end of the post that I wrote in our mastermind forum, on our Facebook group. And then, what I wrote to my email was that they could read what was shared above from a mere level of interest, curiosity about these mastermind things, why people would pay money for such a thing, and maybe from a place of light voyeurism, which is totally okay. Be my guest.

Or you could approach it knowing these are conversations that people have invested a lot of money and time to have because they are savvy businesspeople who know the value of such exchanged, who know a gem, a portal, magic when they see it, and then they run with it.

So, my challenge for you – and 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 work with me, move beyond a mere level of interest or curiosity in what I'm saying if you want to create a transformation in your life. Take this in, make it your own, lean in, really work with me and coach with me.

My challenge for all of you, should you choose to accept it, is to find your own gem that you can use to at least 10X your investment. And I really think you can not only 10X it, you can 100X it and it can be something that compounds with time.

And when I'm talking about 10Xing, I for sure, if you want it to be money, you do it. I'm all for that. I love that. And there are so many ways in which you can also enrich, expand, heal, deepen, beautify, enjoy your life – the list goes on – from an investment like this.

And so, I'm looking at it from all angles, as I shared earlier, you know, one of the things that is so appealing to me about this prolific AF mantra is the freedom that it implies, the inner kindness, the love and trust of my own process and work, even when I also am operating with a human brain that

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has thoughts that come up that want to tell me I don't love and trust my own work.

And I want to say to you, there was a time when I did just have to do it anyway, and with time though, there is really this feeling of tapping into a river that is so nourishing, that is so sacred, that is so much bigger than any of these small ideas about how you have to be good enough or qualified or that you have to meet certain conditions before you allow yourself to believe that you deserve for your voice, for your work, for your creativity to be out in the world.

And once you tap into that and you feel how solid and real that is, you feel how life giving that is, and that's what you lean back into. So, I know you all listening are that kind of person with that kind of mind, who knows how to find a gem and grow it, at least by 10X, if not even more.

Give yourself that belief in yourself. Don't wait for producing a goal or your dream to give you permission to know yourself as someone who deserves to believe in themselves, who deserves to trust themselves.

If you wait for achieving a goal or a dream to believe that now you're worthy of your own trust, it's never going to happen because you're always going to be looking for one more thing, that big leap, that radical act of self-love, that rebellious act of self-love, that revolutionary act of self-love to say, "I am going to believe in myself and trust in myself and I'm going to declare that I get to flow my work and I don't need to pass it through endless filters and editing processes and refinement."

That's going to be create its own momentum. That's going to allow you to experience for yourself the truth of what I'm saying, that your creativity has a life force, a pulse, a heat, a consciousness of its own. And once you feel that sort of energetic lifeline running through you, you're going to want

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more of it. And you're going to want more of it because you're going to see the way it enriches all of your life. You're going to feel alive in ways that maybe you haven't ever felt before.

So, know yourself as someone who is that brilliant, creative, savvy, magnificent. Know yourself as someone that is a genius, and go forth and be prolific AF yourselves. And then please, tell me all about it. I would love to hear.

Thank you for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. And I also want to thank all of you who have been sharing the podcast and sharing it in your stories and sharing it on social media and sharing it just word of mouth with friends. So, I started doing a fun thing and I will continue doing this into the foreseeable future. It seems totally doable for now.

So, when I see someone that has tagged me on Instagram, for example, put up a, "This is the podcast episode I'm listening to. This is me listening to the podcast with my cup of coffee, or out with my dog for a walk," I just decided – well, I always like it and express my appreciation in the comments. And then I decided, I'm just going to pop in and leave them a voice message and say hello because I would like that myself. There's something nice about voice messages.

So, it's been so lovely because then I've gotten to hear back from those of you who I've left messages from after you shared the podcast. And it's so awesome to hear your voice and to hear even a little bit about your life. I am loving that and I am loving that real human connection.

So, don't be shy; say hi. Say, "This is the episode I'm listening to," and then I can pop into your DMs and leave you a thank you, more in person. And until then, thank you again for sharing, subscribing, for being out there and

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listening. And if you yourself are looking for a major up-level in your own law of averages, stay tuned for future opportunities to apply to the Art School Mastermind.

And in the meantime, if you're interested in working with me at some point, including private coaching, you can learn more by going to my website, by emailing us, support@leahcb.com, to be added to the waitlist.

So, in closing today, I thought I would share with you something that I wrote to the masterminders, my masterminders, the Art School Mastermind on our Slack forum this week.

It is aligned with this message, with this approach, with this cultivation of a way of being that is very prolific, very free. The world needs more of you, more of your soul in the world. And how does soul love to travel out into the world? Through your creativity.

Creativity carries with it the essence of who you really are. It's not yours to judge. It is just yours to flow. Let soul creativity take care of the rest.

One of the inevitable results of this will be the awakening and activation and amplification of your innate natural genius. One of the inevitable results of that is that people are going to take note of this fully activated, fully alive, awake, shining, shining, glorious human being. And it is going to awaken in them the knowing that that is what is possible and fully available to them as a human. What can I do to support you in doing this and making it a healing, whole making, holy, fun, joyful, deepening, enriching, adventurous, soul and life building, fulfilling process? What can you do to support you in the same? Whatever it is, I'm all in. Game on. Let's do this.

So, I offer those words to you as well. Game on, let's do this. Go forth and be prolific AF, my friends. I cannot wait to see. So, don't be holding out on

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me. Share your prolific work with me. I want to celebrate with you. I want to acknowledge you. Have a beautiful week, everyone, and I look forward to talking with you next time.