

Ep #191: The Secret to Sublime Creative Freedom: Unrealistic Thinking



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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On this 4th of July, I wanted to create for you a podcast on sublime creative freedom because whatever we are creating, we first create it within. I don't want simply mediocre creativity or a resulting mediocre life for you. What I want for myself and what I want for you, what I want for all of us collectively is something you could describe as a transcendent level of creativity.

Transcendent not because we are denying anything about our humanity. But instead, we are moving beyond ways we have constricted, how we've known ourselves to be, as individuals and as a society, to move beyond the places where we've been constricted by universally held beliefs, traditions, structures, rules, and allowed what's truly possible for us, again, individually and collectively, to rise forth and move through our lives in astonishing ways.

I'm recording this for you in the weeks leading up to July 4th. I know this will be the episode that's released the weekend preceding July 4th. And here in the United States, we celebrate that as our Independence Day. We celebrate freedom. And I know also that we still have so far to go.

And yet, I also know that where we are now, the democracy that we have and that we are still building is the product of, once upon a time, the unrealistic dreamings and imaginings and aspirations. And so, we continue that work and it starts with each of us within, the sublime, transcendent ability to be creatively free, to not deny or ignore current circumstances, and also to exercise, to stretch, to strengthen our ability to dwell in the imaginal, to call upon our visions, to revision the vision for ourselves and for the world collectively.

And to train ourselves to align our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, to think, feel, and behave on purpose, aligned with that vision which has not yet become, in order to create change in our life change in our world, in

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order to create new paradigms. So, join me in this episode. We're going to talk about the freedom and power in thinking unrealistically.

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*. I feel like today's episode is going to be dense energetically, dense potently in what I have to deliver, and probably brief in its messaging. I want to also give you the freedom to enjoy, if you're in the States, your holiday weekend, and sending wishes and intentions for freedom to our entire community around the world.

And I want to say, you all do feel like a community to me, more than an audience, which seems passive and removed, and not like a conversation and not like a relationship. I definitely feel that this podcast, that this Art School community is exactly that. And a community to me is an organic thing full of individual souls with their precious lives.

That's why, at the end of each episode, I offer that coach with me, because in a community, in an emergent, generative community such as this Art School community, we are all cultivating our individual dreams, and also our dreams for the collective. You are all tending, planting seeds, tending to them, harvesting, changing the world. You are all part of creating something new, a grassroots movement.

And again that, to me, is a very active thing, versus an audience, which is also wonderful, but which to me seems like more of a passive,

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nonrelational, nonengaged sort of scenario. So, thank you all for being part of this Art School community.

As I mentioned, I'm recording this anticipating that it comes out a few days before the July 4th weekend, a holiday weekend here in the United States. And I'm also preparing to take some time off before the launch of our next mastermind, which begins mid-July.

Which is also a good time for me to highly encourage you, if you haven't already submitted an application and you know it's been calling to you and you know that there are greater experiences, profound experiences of yourself and of life yet to be had for you and you are wanting to experience yourself as a more efficacious, actualized, empowered creator, if you're wanting to experience yourself free from your own limiting doubts, if you're wanting to experience what life is like when you leave behind, quote unquote, the rules of how things must be created or how success is achieved in your medium, in your profession, in your genre, in your industry and you are wanting to create something so dear and cherished to you and you're wanting to do it on your own terms, in ways that build soul and that are aligned with your values, this is such an extraordinary space, container, experience, community program for that.

Yesterday, I had to lay down on the floor and then go on a long walk. I might get a little choked up talking about it now. Yesterday was the final official call for the last six-month program of the Art School Mastermind. And while I also – I was consoled by the fact that we have nearly every member returning, and the one dear member who was taking a break is doing so to tend to some big family milestones, and she'll be back next January.

And so, when I mentioned this in the mastermind that I was recently a part of, Laura Belgray's Shrimp Club, she was astonished. And she remarked

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that that kind of retention rate is unheard of and unparalleled. And that's because this is an unparalleled community. And there really, as a few members states yesterday, there's really something so extraordinarily special and profound about the Art School Mastermind.

And again, as a container for you to incubate and nurture your creative genius and bring your greatest creative goals and a dreams to life, not only for the fulfilment of that desire, but also for who you get to become and what you get to release and shed, and the freedom that you gain in the process.

Oh, my god, the freedom. I will confess to you, I have a confession. If this hasn't ever come across before, I really have a rebellious streak. I love my autonomy. I do not like being told what to do. So, entrepreneurship suits me very well. I also, growing up, I had a lot of conditioning to be very obedient and a good girl, so definitely have done a lot of deconditioning work around that. And always still more to go.

But my innate nature is that if you tell me I can't do something, if you tell me I can't do something or it can't be done that way, it just pokes a tiger in me that is like, "Well then, watch me," or that it can't be done a certain way, or that it isn't done a certain way.

And this has been a key for me, a key to making unrealistic thinking work on my behalf, a key to defying odds, a key to defying, quote unquote, the rules of how things have to be done or any sort of logic or rational norms or standards.

And you know, a word that also came up a lot yesterday during our final call or this cohort of the mastermind was this word magic, and magical. I wrote years ago – actually, I had it on a podcast that came to me randomly and then I laminated it, or I put resin on it to make it last forever and hung it

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where I could always see it. And it was the phrase, “You make me believe I magic.”

I wanted all of the work that I do through my coaching work and also through my art and through my writing to bring alive again that sense of magic and wonder and awe, which to me, also comes when you remember who you are, when you become connected again to the divinity within you, the divine origin of your desires, your dreams, your hopes.

Magic is the feeling of feeling alive again Magic is the feeling of being reconnected or perhaps awakening for the very first time to the massive, massive power and potential and genius that lives within you.

And so, that, to a lot of people, looks and sounds like unrealistic thinking. And it’s also why I shared the story about tapping into my tigress, rebellious, defy norms and odds loving self, not because that has to be you too.

I don’t want you to think, “Oh, there’s something special about her.” I don’t feel that way. I’ve never tapped into that. I’ve never felt that. It’s not anything special about me. It’s simply this. If you refuse to give up, that combination, that kind of grit, that kind of tenacity, paired with unrealistic thinking – and I’m going to define a little further what I mean by unrealistic thinking, but that kind of grit and tenacity of, “I will see this through. I know where I am headed and I know I’m willing to feel a lot of things and experience a lot of things along the way. But I’m hanging onto that vision and I will succeed. I will.”

Because here is my caveat and then also, this is a podcast about breaking rules and breaking norms, and I’ve got one for you. So, there’s a paradox in breaking rules. Very meta.

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With unrealistic thinking, with big dreams, with moonshot goals, with imaginal thinking, with believing in impossible things, one thing you must do is promise to yourself, commit to yourself that you will never use that vision, that dream, that desire, that goal against yourself.

So, if you set, let's say, a goal of becoming a millionaire, of breaking seven figures as an artist, then you also commit to – I call this the sacred twin intention – what that process is going to be like for you. You define parameters. You have a protocol that says, "I will not beat up on myself. I will not loathe myself, I will not scorn myself. I will not berate myself along the way because I've committed to this courageous goal to grow me and to help me free my own creative expression and to help me inspire myself to think greater than what I have thought is possible for me in the past, to think greater than what I have seen other artists do."

Then you must commit to yourself to not use that against yourself, to never say, "Well, I've only made \$50,000 this year, there must be something wrong." No, because then the process is also about the inner work of developing the inner support system, the supportive beliefs, the supportive mindset, the nurturing inner mindset and support system that, as you move along, helps you birth this new identity and birth this new reality.

So, it came up recently in the mastermind, in our discussion around really tapping into desires, allowing yourself to want what you want and because you want it, tapping into the power of that, one of our members, Stacey Hylan had shared a quote from Jesse Itzler, and I'm going to paraphrase, but something to the spirit that my life is a product of unrealistic thinking, or I want my life to be a product of unrealistic thinking. And you get to decide that as well.

You get to decide that your life gets to be the product of unrealistic thinking. I want to remind you over and over again that you get to decide what you

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create in this life, and then you get to decide who you become in the process.

And so, interesting story, as I was trying to Google to find the exact words that Jesse Itzler had spoken in reference to that quote, instead what it pulled up were all of these cautionary tales and articles about the danger of unrealistic thinking, about the power of realistic thinking.

And I know where they're coming from in terms of being able to – basic project management things, right? And then also, I think it is coming from a place, a cautionary place where we want to caution people against the hazards of being disappointed, of getting your heart broken. And then that eating into your relentless energy, the tenacious energy, that eating into your faith.

But what if we instead get to have a discussion about the power of unrealistic thinking to move us beyond current confining norms and standards, things where we just feel our lives and our souls are cramped and suffocating.

And we can eek out success. You can even be so successful but still your soul doesn't feel alive, you don't feel fulfilled. Instead, can we broaden and expand the conversation to talk again about the power of unrealistic thinking, and also this personal commitment to, how are you going to build yourself in the process, your soul?

Can it be a process where you grow in kindness and consciousness and wisdom and love while you also grow in affluence, in a soulful success, in profound, extraordinary, beautiful, wild beyond your imagining experiences? Yes. That's the kind of conversation I want to have, the yes and.

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I want to know that I can learn how to grow from my troubles and from adversity that comes from stretching, going beyond what's been done before. I want to be told again and again, you can survive heartbreak and disappointment and you can be stronger and deeper, and again, kinder, wiser, more loving, more compassionate, deepened, more expansive, wealthier, have a greater range of life experiences, more abundant for it.

I do not like to feel limited in the least in any way. I want, for myself, an uncapped life. And it was something that also came up in our mastermind call yesterday, was the appreciation for a space and a group of people who were not capping themselves and not capping one another, but who instead could hold an expansive, constructive, nuanced, big place for the deepest desires and greatest imaginings, greatest visions of the entire group.

That kind of community is extraordinary and in that kind of community, wondrous things are inevitable. And here is an additional awesome thing about that, that's so moving to me about this group and this community, is that if it can be done individually and then in micro communities such as the mastermind cohort, it can be done on a greater scale.

And so, this applies, yes, to our individual lives and our near-in families and workspaces and industries and communities. And this kind of living and imagining and envisioning and then creating is also going to spill over because the unrealistic is what is going to come to be if we are tenacious and wild in our imaginings and deep in our longing and commitment to it and devoted in our love, is kindness and consciousness and wisdom and love in our society, in greater and greater measures, freedom in our society in greater and greater measures.

This is what I've referenced before as being the ultimate creative (r)evolution. Imagine that R in parentheses because it is a new order that

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also evolves us all, and then also behooves us all to move beyond thinking of a revolution as something that requires bloodshed and hatred and massive killing and violence, and to instead imagine a society where we are actually learning and maturing and expanding and evolving to hold a space where we hold tension, we allow for disagreement, and we also keep in mind that North Star, that vision of an inclusive, beautiful, equal freedom for all that we're going to move towards together.

And I want to make sure to include in this conversation the fact that we have to expand our concept of ourselves as being able to hold difficult spaces. We have to expand our self-concept as being resilient and strong and resourceful, to move through all sorts of situations that in the past maybe we thought we couldn't bear, we couldn't tolerate, or that would outright destroy us.

We have to learn how to care for our central nervous systems. You have to learn how to be with yourself and what you're going to decide again and again, the times it feels like nothing is working out, or when you have a lot of old stories and shame rising up. And I do believe, as A Course in Miracles says that love brings up anything unlike itself in order that it may be released.

And I know that when you commit to a life that is based on your true desires, that is love. And love will bring up anything that is inconsistent with that life. Love will bring up all of these fears that you're being stupid, that you're being irresponsible. It will bring up feelings of guilt and shame.

This is not just hypotheses. I'm speaking from personal experience. I have felt so stupid. I have felt so irresponsible and wracked with guilt and like I was destroying – I felt like my being was somehow morally offensive or wrong when I first started on this path of allowing myself to want what I want and move in the direction of my vision.

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A lot of that has been cleared and it's ongoing work. What I have known to be such a gift and an ally though is to learn how to tap into a grace that abides, a grace outside of me, a grace all around me, but also deep within me.

Because having worked through new level, same old devil, for me it tends to be, "Oh my god, I'm so stupid. I'm so irresponsible," or just somehow a wash of guilt and shame that feels like it's going to destroy me, just that like my existence is wrong.

But underneath it, I feel the presence of truth. And before I could feel that though, I just decided to believe that. I just decided to believe that no matter what I did, I was still of love, I was still lovable, and I could still be deserving of love, I could still actually be deserving, even if I wasn't quote unquote deserving because this evolution for me has required me to break a lot of rules and ideas and traditions around what makes someone deserving, or even the thought that you have to be deserving in order to be worthy, that you have to somehow deserve love, or the kind of life that I thought someone deserving of love would also have.

So, I want to offer that to you. No matter what comes up for you, to decide that you are worthy of your own tenacity, that you are worthy of a rest when you need rest, that you are worthy of your deepest desires and greatest dreams, that you are worthy of your own relentless belief and faith in yourself. You are worthy of your own tenacity and to keep going.

So often, when I have felt the rock-bottom moments, the lowest of the low and have prayed and have meditated, the simple phrase always comes through, "Just keep going. Just keep going, sweetheart. You're doing it. Just keep going."

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And then, that can oftentimes be enough of the sliver of grace that I need to remember that I get to decide. I get to decide what my life is about. I get to decide what I create in this life. I get to decide who I become, the experiences I have. I get to decide how I move through trouble, difficulty, and adversity, including the kind that rises up from within, but also the kind that comes at me from without. And so do you.

You get to decide who you are and what your life will be. Decide again and again and again what you are creating, whether it's a six-figure year as an artist, millions of dollars in the bank, piles of your own books on the shelf and on bestseller lists, or maybe it's a quiet life where you tend to a creativity that nourishes you, lights you up from the inside out.

Anything is on the table. It's all on the table, no matter what you've done or not done so far in your life. No matter what you've seen other people do.

And if you have thought, "Well, that will never be me, there's just some flaw about me," I know that one to. I've had that one over and over again, and each time, have proved it wrong, and still it comes up at many different levels.

But you get to move beyond that. You don't have to give it so much of your time and attention. You don't have to believe it. You can return to what you want to believe on purpose.

You do not have to make yourself small or make your life small in order to conform with reality. You too can learn to think and learn to create unrealistically.

When people talk about reality and being realistic, they are usually referring to their beliefs about how things work for people like them, or people that

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they knew, how it's worked for them in the past or in their profession, in their industry, in their family, in their community, when people speak of thinking realistically, they usually mean they are going to limit their thinking, imagining, dreaming, desiring, planning, and then acting, to fit within standards or rules or probabilities, ideas, predetermined structures that were established by, quote unquote authorities, outside of them.

But that they then feel they must submit to and stay within, even though whenever I talk to someone who is doing this, who is trying to live their life and create within the bounds of current reality, they have a certain energy and it overtakes all of their affect. They literally, it's like they get a little dimmer. Not in terms of their intelligence, but just a light. Their energy is pulled back and smaller. There's more of a crouching and a timidness. And they talk about how, when they're really tapped in, they can feel so big.

But then, they feel like they have to crouch and contort and manipulate, warp themselves to fit within the rules of the game, or how it's done, in order to be successful, in order to win.

But how is either of those things ever successful, or winning? They're not. And there's a third way. You don't win by removing yourself, abandoning your truth or your magic. You can absolutely create a new way. You can, again, tap into your imagination, the unreal as of yet realm, and draw forth from that, channel from that, create from that something, as I mentioned in the intro, that feels entirely transcendent because it transcends the current boundaries of how things are done. It transcends the box of how things are done.

It's a place where you tap into your imagination. You have to go to a place where the rules don't apply to you. Anyone who has ever created anything with this transcendent quality to it and changed their life and changed the world had to go to a place where the rules don't apply to them.

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They had to defy norms. They had to defy quote unquote rational and realistic thinking. Is that always a safe place? No, it's not. It's not. And so, it's developing also then the inner skillset and the inner strength. Because just because it's not safe, doesn't mean you can't be a maverick and go there.

And I think that word's on my mind – I love the work maverick, and I also saw that movie last night. So, clearly even from the beginning opening scene, not only breaking the sound barrier, but breaking it 10 times over, breaking barriers, moving beyond boundaries that others have said or are impassable, that's our evolution, and deciding again that we are going to do it in the spirit of consciousness, of the capital C Creativity, being aligned with our truth, with kindness, with love, that we are going to evolve in the direction of wisdom.

That also is something that we get to decide and that we have to decide again and again. Because a lot of times, it looks like nothing is working. That's when you need to double down and that's when the inner work matters. Because again, no matter where you've been in the past, no matter what you've told yourself in the past is available to you or not, now is an opportunity to reconnect with the power and the potential that lives within you.

And getting in contact with your dreams and desires is an excellent way to do that because now is also the time when you can set yourself on an entirely new path.

And you can also support yourself on that new path with highly intentional belief systems, internal and external environments, structures, support systems that guide you along the way, that strengthen and nourish you along the way, that help you reach that goal, that dream, wake up in that new reality inevitably.

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This is 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. And so, I thought for a while, what would be the best exercise? And again, just the shard of a coaching lesson that I can offer here in a podcast episode that will also meet everyone in this community, no matter whether you have been on this path for decades or whether you are entirely new to this kind of work.

And what I have found again and again, including for myself, and I think I've been on this path for a while, is that there are always places where my submitting, my agreeing to the bounds of reality was on my blind spot, where there were things that I was just taking as truth and therefore not examining, not enquiring about.

And I find, when you ask yourself, what's unrealistic to me? It shows you what your world view is. And this work is very much about us together individually and collectively being able to create new worlds by first shifting our world view.

So, if you ask yourself, what do I want? What would I allow myself to want but I think is unrealistic? Write out first what you want, what your heart desires. And then, write out why you think it's unrealistic.

It may seem counterintuitive, but these places where you think something is unrealistic for you, there's gold there. That's where you start digging. That's where you start releasing boundaries that you have, to this point, considered impassable.

You can do this on your own. you absolutely can do this kind of inquiry work on your own, hiring a coach, doing the work of Byron Katie, self-inquiry is so empowering. And I want to also say, your soul knows the way

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forward. Trust it step by step and you can use the question, that shifting one degree question of, “How can I see this differently?”

Is there a 1% opening I can see for myself where I have been believing, “This is unrealistic. This is impossible for me.” And can I shift that even a little bit today?

A great way in that I love to use is to ask, can I imagine this being normal for someone else? Can I imagine, even if it’s difficult for someone else, can I still imagine that it’s in the realm of possibility for them? And then, I would travel down that road of inquiring then, why not me? Why do I think I’m different?

Again, people are reluctant to look at the places where they have limitations, just buying in, cooperating, submitting to, without questioning, boundaries of what’s possible for them in their lives. And they’re afraid that by looking at these places, it somehow reinforces them.

But if you take the orientation that no, I’m not going to use anything against me, I’m going to use everything for me. If you take the orientation of, “I am on the path to liberation from inside out. I’m on a path of creating anything I want and this right here is a data point. This right here is information that is going to guide me back in line with that ultimate destination.

I promise you that if you feel stuck or limited in any way right now, there’s another way to see things. There is another way to see yourself and there is another way to see the world and the possibilities for your life.

Sometimes, we have a hard time seeing it for ourselves. But again, that inner guidance, that sense of stuckness, that sense of limitation, that

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feelings that there's more for me, that idea that there's something better for me, that dream, that, "Heck, why not me?" Trust that.

Your work in this life is to remember who you really are. And when you remember who you really are, you remember what is possible for you, what is absolutely within the realm of realistic when you set your heart and mind upon it. And once you do this, the external world begins to rearrange itself.

So, if you do nothing else with this episode but contemplate this, speak to yourself, your soul, have a conversation on a deep level about this, who am I? What is it that I really want? If I were not confined or limited to reality as it currently is, or to being realistic, what would I do? What would I pursue? What would I be thinking, feeling, believing about my life?

And sometimes, people can get frustrated and stuck. And so, I want to offer this as well. A useful workaround can be to ask yourself this; what do I wish were true about me? What do I wish were actually possible in my life? What would, in my heart of hearts, I love to believe about me? What do I secretly wish was true for my life?

Don't dismiss inquiries like this. Even these portals, small as though they may seem, they start to allow the truth of who you really are, the essence of who you really are back out into the light of day. And as I said before, once that happens, the external world starts to respond, not to who you've been trying to pretend you are, which is limited, but to who you have always and will always be; infinite, eternal, uncapped, limitless, sublimely, transcendently creative.

Thank you for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. Again, I so appreciate this community. And the intentions that I set for this community, I do not believe are unrealistic, unfathomable at all because I have had the privilege of getting to know so many of you and getting to

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know your hearts and getting to know your creativity and getting to know your brilliance, getting to know your dreams and getting to see the process of you actualizing yourself and what that awakens in you.

It's giving me goosebumps to think about it, to say it now. And these are the people that I've had the privilege and the honor of working with one to one and very closely in the Art School and in the Art School Mastermind.

This is such a profoundly extraordinary community and my intentions are that, as it grows, that the power, the goodness, the creativity only amplifies. And again, my intentions are that the values we amplify as a community, whether you're just within this Art School space, but then all of you are also leaders.

You're leaders in your family, in your industries, in your communities, in your churches, your industries in your organizations. Many of you are leaders and healers, change agents, and visionaries.

And so, I want to share that my intentions for the values that are amplified are the values of kindness, of consciousness, of capital C Creativity, of wisdom, of love, of compassion, of affluence, of wealth.

And I include wealth and call it out specifically – it falls under the umbrella of affluence, but call it out specifically because I do believe that when good people, when capital C Creatives, when artists – and I have so many women in this community, and also men, when these good-spirited, good-hearted visionaries are well-resourced, this is what is changing the world and will change the world, particularly with these values encoded into everything that you do.

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So, thank you for being a part of this community. And if you are so called, thank you in advance for helping me blow past that million downloads mark. Because there's no logical reason to believe that that will work. I don't have the platform of a Tim Ferris for example. And yet, I know and I get to decide that that's my reality, so thank you for coming along for that ride.

To close, I want to bring up these words again. I want my life to be the product of unrealistic thinking. I want that for all of you. So, go out, defy gravity, defy the odds. Be someone who decides what they are about, decides who they are, decides what they are going to create, who breaks all the rules, who makes other people say, "How in the world does she do that? How in the world did he pull that off?"

I had this shirt that I love. I found it years ago. It called to me. Like really nothing special, I think I got it at Old Navy. But I absolutely love what was emblazoned across the front, and that was, "Create something that lasts forever."

I have no logical reason, again, to think I know how to do that. But something about it just lit a fire in my soul. And having fires lit within your soul is not a bad way to live. Don't wait for someone else to give you permission. Don't wait for someone else to tell you that you have what it takes. You decide that. You get to decide that you've got massive power and massive potential within you. You get to decide what is and is not possible for you. So, you choose you. Choose you and then choose the life you are going to create.

Do not let reality define you, but go out and create it. Have a beautiful week, everyone, and I look forward to talking with you next time.