

**Ep #198: Energy First:
The Secret to Creating with Ease**



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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“I believe the way to write a good play is to convince yourself it is easy to do. Then, go ahead and do it with ease,” Tennessee Williams. Now, you may or may not be a playwright, but I know you can substitute any work of art for play in these instructions from the great playwright Tennessee Williams, and have your experience of your work, and your work, improve by leaps and bounds.

What I want to talk with you about today is something that might be currently missing from your creative process that could both enhance the end result and elevate and deepen, enrich your experience of it. Today, we’re talking about something I call energy first.

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 and welcome, everyone, to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. So, there have been so many exciting, wonderful things happening. But I think I will save that for another episode and possibly even a newsletter. So make sure we’re connected that way. You can sign up for my newsletter, www.leahcb.com.

I do have a lot of wonderful offerings coming that span the spectrum of price points and various levels of interest. And so, again, I will save that for newsletters and later podcasts because today, I want to deliver a short and sweet episode on something I call energy first.

So, I’ve been writing a book about creativity, and this is one of the working titles. I’m not going to read you everything in those first vomit-draft versions. But I wanted to share just a little glimpse into this idea. It was something that we’ve been talking about in the mastermind and I shared to

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the free Art School Facebook community, so you should also join there if you're not already. Lots of exciting things coming up there.

And I opened it with this quote from Tennessee Williams. I shared just a part of it, a short part in the intro, but I wanted to read the entire thing for you now.

“I believe the way to write a good play is to convince yourself it is easy to do, then go ahead and do it with ease. Don't mull. Don't suffer. Don't groan until the first draft is finished. A play is a phoenix and it dies 1000 deaths, usually at night. In the morning, it springs up again from its ashes and crows like a happy rooster. It is never as bad as you think. It is never as good. It is somewhere in between and success or failure depends on which end of your emotional gamut concerning its value it approaches more closely. But it is much more likely to be good if you think it is wonderful while you are writing the first draft. An artist must believe in himself – or herself. Your belief is contagious. Others may say he is vain, but they are affected.” Again, that's from Tennessee Williams.

There are so many exciting angles from which to approach this paragraph of text from Mr. Williams. And one of the ways that I think is so fascinating from which to consider it is from current neuroscience.

Because he writes and he's speaking as an experienced artist. And the neuroscience now would back him up on this, that it is much more likely to be good if you think it is wonderful while you're writing the first draft. An artist must believe in himself.

Because we know from the neuroscience that if you are in a critical state – and I've done an episode on this, how the brain perceives criticism as an actual physical threat and how that shifts our neurotransmitters, it shifts our biology into a state of fight, flight, freeze, or fawn.

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You cannot be in that state and simultaneously access and have available to you your full creative potential. From this state, the stress response state, this survival state and mode, you don't have access to the imaginal. You don't have access to long-term memory, the places where long-term memory are stored.

And I want to say something because people have asked me, "Why does it matter whether or not we have access to where our long-term memory is stored?" And here's why. Your whole life, you have been endlessly curating and accumulating information in story. It is stored in your brain, whether you know it or not. It is stored even in your tissues, in your cell, in your body, in your biology.

You are a walking encyclopedia not only of information, but also of access to nuance and detail. All of your life, your brain, your body have been accumulating experiences, images, stories, and then storing them away in your long-term memory.

But when you are in fight, flight, freeze, fawn, in these survival states, you don't have access to that because, in those states, in that survival mode, you are – because of evolution – focused on just the big three. Your body right now, its safety, or sense of not safety, time – so that's when we experience time pressure – and your very near immediate surroundings.

Your brain wants to edit out anything else because, if you are being chased by a tiger, considering anything else, considering a scene you witnessed between your grandmother and your mother when you were seven years old and eating your soggy Cheerios that had a massive impact on you, that might make its way into your play, you don't want to be thinking about that when it's a life-or-death situation.

And when we are feeling criticized, whether it's from the outside, but also whether we are withering under the spell of our own inner critic, we don't

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have access to this wealth of information and inspiration and story that we have accumulated. So, that's a little side tangent on the importance of long-term memory to whatever we are creating.

And it's not just for storytellers or writers, novelists, poets. But also for painters, for visual artists, we carry around with us records of things we've seen, signs and symbols. Life is always having a conversation with us, whether we are conscious of it or not. But our psyche is aware and our psyche is always absorbing what it feels is necessary for our life, for our evolution, for our purpose, for our vocation and calling.

Also, the neuroscience has shown, through studies of jazz musicians, that the area of their brain that is quiet, that allows them to access flow and improvise, is the area of the brain that's analytical, that would engage in self-analysis that's not helpful.

So, all of this, I believe, is just a great cosigning, undersigning of what Mr. Williams knew, that the importance of thinking it is wonderful while you are writing the first draft and of believing in yourself taps into an energy that is contagious, that flows through the piece.

So, again, of the many ways I could talk about this particular quote today and how instructional it can be for us, the wisdom in it, what I really want to focus on are these two aspects. One, the foundational, critical importance of believing in yourself, that believing in your work, in fact, is like this positive contagion that moves into your work, that also carries you through the ability to then come back to it again and again and it is finally imparted to the end receiver.

The second part that I wanted to talk about is this concept, this practice, I believe it's a powerful practice of tapping into the energy first of what wants to be formed.

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As he said, “I believe the way to write a good play is to convince yourself it is easy to do and then go ahead and do it with ease.” Believe it is wonderful.

And so, I wanted to elaborate on that, on what that might look like specifically. One practice that I suggest is spending time in what would be a meditative state, where you sense that which wants to come through you, whether it is a new entrepreneurial endeavor, whether it's a new different offer in your creative business, whether it's a new painting or a body of work, a new album, a new book, a short story, a poem, it doesn't matter.

It could be a new member of your family. You're thinking about growing your family and you want to tap into that possibility. You want to change your life, move across the country. Tap into what that future feels like. And do it without words or images to start with.

Drop into wordlessness. Drop into a place of sensing where you're not using language or you're not trying to attach images from ways you've seen things done in the past but you are just present with what wants to arise through you or with what is already presence-ing and making itself known.

And as you move into this place where I call dropping language – and this is something I work on with my clients because it is a skill. It is a capacity that I know we all have and I believe, at one point, it was intuitive. It's ancient. It's in us. And then, it gets conditioned out of us. But that doesn't mean that you cannot – and rather quickly and again more strongly over time – become more adept at moving into this state.

It is a skill to be able to shift states like this. First of all, you have to know that that's available for you. You might have wandered in and out of this accidentally sometimes, you know, when you're staring off into the middle distance and you're feeling something, there's a vague sort of movie or

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something playing out within you and you're not in the critical mind, you've likely – I know you all have experienced this sometime.

And so, this is just learning to do it at will, masterfully. You drop into this place, you drop language, and drop into the sense, the felt sense, the energetic sense of what wants to happen.

What is the benefit of that? The benefit of that is then you are allowing something truly original and creative and you're not attaching ideas of how you think it should be done, how others have done it, what's been done in the past by going to language. Because what we have known through language and image can limit the potential, the full expression of what wants to come through us now.

What we have known, we tend to know in language and image and then we apply what we've know, we try to, when we're thinking critically, on top of when we're thinking, "Is this any good?" well, it's no good because it doesn't resemble what Tennessee Williams would have wrote, so therefore it can't be any good, it doesn't look like the way a play is usually done.

But when we do that, again, we move into the critical mode of the brain and we are stunting the potential of what is rising and wants to happen through us.

And now, I want to make sure that in talking about this concept, which I just geek out over – this, to me, is one of the juiciest parts of creativity. This is absolutely, for me, creativity is a spiritual practice, is an intuitive practice. And also, pragmatically in very real ways, enriches my life, makes me feel alive, makes me so excited to engage with the work.

So, I geek out over this and I want to make sure that we don't just leave it as information but you adapt it as an actual practice to enhance and elevate your own creative process, yes, your own creative work, yes, and

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ultimately restore your trust in yourself, your trust in your genius, knowing that you can lead with your genius.

And if you're thinking, how do I do that? This is one of the ways, this practice of energy first is one of the ways to reteach yourself of your own loveliness, as the poet said, to reacquaint yourself with the force of your own genius. This is a regeniusing practice.

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. So what I want to do today is to ask you, highly suggest that you meditate upon this.

How much time, how much energy, how much devotion, how much contemplation do you usually give to first tapping into a true, felt sense and deep knowing that what you are about to do is easy to do?

So, he writes, "I believe the way to write a good play is to convince yourself it is easy to do, then go ahead and do it with ease." So, I want to pull out, tease out, and really blow up and focus on this part of convincing yourself.

This is the inner work that is very much about the outer work that we're doing all the time in the Art School and it's what I want to encourage all of you, as an option to really remove inner obstacles, to befriend the critic, to restore your joy and love that was probably your original impetus for ever wanting to be a creative and an artist, to create anything in the first place.

It will pay massively if you spend time learning what it is, what it takes to convince yourself it is easy to do. This is what I'm talking about when I say that we are focusing on cultivating a way of being. We're cultivating states of being that are very conducive to flow, to creating with ease, to giving ourselves the permission to do it with ease.

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And so, I also want to give you permission to give yourself permission to believe in yourself, to believe in the most beautiful possibilities for yourself and for your work, to believe in the most beautiful things about your potential and your capacity.

And if you are thinking, “My gosh, I feel so far from that, I feel terrible about my work. It feels so hard and it always feels so hard to do,” no need to judge yourself. Definitely don’t judge yourself.

I just want you to know, it is absolutely possible to revolutionize your own experience with the work, of the work, your own relationship to yourself and to the work. Again, this is why I think creativity, capital-C Creativity can be a spiritual path.

Because in order to change your relationship to the work, this is going to mean changing a very deep and fundamental relationship with yourself. And you might be thinking only micro-shifts are available. No. Radical, major overhauls are available.

I see it all of the time. I have seen people who are vastly different from each other, who start in different places from different backgrounds, who can come to the work with such a tragic, heavy, incredible amount of self-loathing, a terrible inner critic that is so hard on themselves, feeling so blocked, and like their prospects are dim and like the light in them feels dim.

And I have seen, again and again people make miraculous changes, miraculous changes in their life that came first from a decision to imagine, even if they couldn’t feel possibilities for their life, to be just a little bit willing in the beginning to believe that it might be possible for them, that they might be wrong about how it’s not possible for them.

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It's just that little bit of willingness because in the center of your being is an original song, is a flame. And that is what has brought you to the work. And that is what will sustain you and guide you and is always with you, is always giving you all of the energy you will ever need to do, create, be, experience everything your heart and soul long for.

It is so worth your time. You are so worth the time to spend the time tapping into this energy, learning how to summon it, move into it, feel it, sense it, and then sustain it in your life.

We've been doing more and more guided meditations in the Art School because I want this to be, again, like the Olympic training program. And therefore, what's required is a holistic approach, mind, body, and spirit, where we're not just talking about things and not just doing things, but the shift is real. It is at a cellular level. It is felt with every fiber of your spiritual being, that you are infused and open and drinking from a deep, deep well. And that well, that well spring is within you.

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. I have heard from so many more of you recently and I love it. I love connecting with you.

So, one way to do that, as always, is on Instagram, @leahcb1, that's my handle there. And as I've mentioned, via my newsletter. I love it when you guys reply also to my newsletter. I read them all. I have been responding to them all. I'm not always able to do it right away. But I just want you to know, I really appreciate the connection and that this is more than an audience to me.

This is a community. And every time I get to have an encounter with someone that feels more personal, that just feels more alive. And I want to thank you for that because that also fuels and inspires me.

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And so, if you want to pay it forward, I would so love your help in spreading the news. The best ways to do that are to share, share with friends, allies, colleagues, on social media, tag me, @leahcb1 and also to go to iTunes and leave a review.

I highly appreciate those. It really does help us reach more and more people. And therefore, the paradigm-shifting potential of this kind of work just grows. And if you want a closer connection to this work, if you want to experience a profound, deep, creative revolution not only of your own work but of your own experience of yourself and what's within you and what you are capable of and from a place of joy, true strength and resilience and ease and so much laughter and fun, I highly encourage you to apply to the Art School Mastermind. We are offering a rolling enrollment and the link to apply will be in the show notes.

If you have any questions whatsoever, please feel free to email us, support@leahcb.com and we will take amazing care of you.

To close today, I wanted to share one of my favorite mantras and affirmations for tapping into this energy of convincing oneself it's easy to do, being in the energy of ease. And it is from the grand dame Julia Cameron. And it goes like this, "I am a channel for God's creativity and my work comes to good."

Now, if God has a charge for you, the word God, and it rubs the wrong way, feel free, play with it. Substitute, use your own language, the universe, "I am a channel for cosmic creativity. I am a channel for divine creativity, for universal creativity, for astounding capital-C Creativity and my work comes to good." Or, create an affirmation or mantra of your own.

One of the things that I find so powerful about affirmations and mantras when also paired with this intention and then actual physical practice and then embodiment of moving into a state where you are sensing the energy

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of what wants to happen is that then the words before you move into that wordless state can become like a portal, like a trigger, like a summons that tells your whole body, “Oh now, this is what we are doing, we are recalling this state. We are now moving through the portal, through a threshold into this state.”

And it can just help that more effortless and sometimes more immediate shift into that state where you are feeling in flow and ease. I’m wishing you all a week of beautiful creativity, ease, flow, affluence. Enjoy the end of the summer, if you are in the Western Hemisphere like I am, or the return to summer for our friends on the other side of the world. And I look forward to talking with you all next time.