

Ep #201: Stop Planning, Start Imagining



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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“Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning,” Gloria Steinem. I think also, what I want to add for this episode is it’s not only the excitement of possibilities that we lose out on when we don’t make leaps of imagination or dream.

We also lose out on the possibility of making great leaps in the way we change. We limit ourselves. We confine ourselves to who we think we have been, to our past, to what we’ve known, to what others have known. And then, therefore our world is constrained by just what we’ve known.

But with imagination, with dreaming, we can open ourselves up to something we might not even recognize, but it’s something more right, more true, more possibly wildly improbable and beyond our wildest dreams than we could have consciously chosen for ourselves.

I have a powerful story, a magical true story to share with you today. This is one you won’t forget. And I’m so glad because there is something very instructional in this story that I know you can carry with you to create leaps of change and possibilities beyond your wildest imagination in the creation of your own greatest life.

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*. How are you doing? I have had a banner week, thank you very much. I will also say, the week before, it was also a banner week and a very trying week. Actually, the two weeks before that.

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And it's not irrelevant to everything I share on this podcast, but more on that, I think, in a future podcast. And actually, the difficulties in the couple of weeks preceding I think, really, were necessary in order to lay the groundwork and make possible the unfoldings that happened this week.

And part of what made it a banner week is that I had the opportunity to do so many one-on-one private coaching calls with clients; current clients former clients, brand-new-to-me clients, and it was remarkable. It just took my breath away.

And then, today, I got to catch up with a former client. And we were reminiscing. And as comes up on almost every call or time I get to talk with her – which is not often enough – we talk about this story.

She's like, "Remember when that..." I'm like, "Yeah, I know this story. It's so juicy." And it's so aligned with everything I've been discussing here about creation and conscious creation and tapping into the energy first and leaving behind the hows that we're accessing when we're trying to develop the how from the way things have been done before, and instead trusting our knowing, trusting our intuition, leaning into our capital C Creativity and allowing ourselves that knowing, giving ourselves permission to know that which no one has given us permission to know but we know it deep in our bones, and living from that place.

It's such a different paradigm. When no one has handed you a Ph.D. and said, "Here now, you're certified. You're an authority on this. You can talk on this." So, that theme came up over and over again this week in one-on-one conversations with people that don't know each other.

Some of them do. Some of them are in the mastermind and I also coach them one-on-one. So, they're in one another's orbits. And others aren't.

A universal theme in this work of becoming an empowered Creative with a capital C – and this applies to everybody. It doesn't apply only to artists. It

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applies to humans – creativity, the imagination, human capacities, human gifts and abilities and traits.

And part of the journey, part of the process of this regeniusing, of reclaiming these innate gifts of coming back into our knowing is this process of allowing ourselves to trust ourselves.

And as we have talked on this podcast before and in Art Schools and we were talking about it again this week in the Art School Mastermind, when you go into the embodiment of what it is like to trust yourself and you drop the label of trust, you drop all language and you just drop into the direct experience of what it feels like when you trust yourself, when you let yourself know what you know what you know, it feels like the energy of love.

And that's what we were discussing in the mastermind, and how belief is right there too. So, maybe they're very distinct frequencies or vibrations, but also very close and very similar. Trust, love, belief, and then there's a freedom in there too. And I think that freedom comes from the fact of, when you are in a trusting place like that, trusting of yourself, loving of yourself, believing of yourself in that energy, you're free because it's unconditional.

You get to have that trust and that love and that belief unconditionally. It is not based on you having to prove it, you having to justify it, you having to earn it. You have it as an entitlement from being a human, from being born.

And this can feel like a very dangerous, scary thing because we've been taught it's dangerous and scary to not trust ourselves. We've been taught we can't survive our failures. We've been taught we can't survive our own true natures, particularly as original thinkers as creatives.

We've been taught we don't have our own direct connection to source, to something as divine and sacred as a collective consciousness or imagination.

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And so, the fear that people often experience when coming back into trusting themselves is a deconditioning process, deconditioning those places where we have been taught that that's dangerous. And in many ways, it is dangerous. But not dangerous as in we're going to become a threat to one another, but dangerous to a society and systems that have been built and that rely on us oppressing our power and our gifts and our intuition and our creativity and our knowing.

So, that's a little bit of a tangent. I get a little bit fired up talking about that. But it also sets me up to share this story which is really the crown jewel in today's episode.

So, when I was working with this particular client, she had created so much success in her life and so many beautiful things, beautiful career success, family, and she had also been through a lot of trials and she'd walked through the metaphorical fire a number of times.

And an anthem for her at that time was freedom, because while she had created an incredible amount of professional success and beautiful children, her heart was also crying for freedom and something more. And it's that more that is not the next job promotion, that's not the next tax bracket or even better home or even lifestyle. Just something that is a leap into a life that felt truly hers from the inside out and a life full of incredible love.

And she could feel it. That's why freedom was such an anthem for her because, when she tapped into the word freedom and said, "Freedom," you could tell she was tapped into a powerful intention and she could feel the reality of the more that was available to her.

It wasn't some incremental improvement or external shifting around of pieces in her life, some rearranging of the deck chairs on the Titanic. No, it was a true, existential more, a transformation.

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And so, we were working and working and, at one point, there was this time – and I remember it was right around Christmas time – when from the same place that I felt she tapped into freedom as, again, an anthem but also a guardian and a guide for her, she said – and it gives me chills right now even just remembering it, “A year from now, I am not going to recognize my life.” And I have whole-body chills again, electricity thinking about it and we both did.

We could both feel a shift and we both knew it. We didn’t know how. We didn’t even know exactly what it was going to look like. But what she said, those words, “A year from now, I am not going to recognize my life,” had that feeling of, it is done.

And, within a few weeks, things started to happen. And she has also shared that she’s going to be writing a blog about this story, about this time of working with me. So, if that is up by the time this podcast episode is released, I will be sure to link to that.

But what unfolded was pure storybook whirlwind. It involved romance. Beyond romance. It involved meeting soulmate, twin flame, the whole nine yards. And this was not something that she had expressed because she had had relationships in the past and she thought, “That’s not really what this next part of my life is about. That’s not what my second act is going to be about.”

And yet, when she tapped into that energy of freedom, and then this person came into her life, it all was aligned. It was all of the same energy. And so, again, there was this meeting a soulmate when it was totally unexpected.

There were red carpets. I think the first date was a coffee shop, and then I believe the second date was the Oscars. And that is just an example of how her year started.

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And fast forward a year and we would laugh just peals of laughter, giving us giggles because the truth of that, “I won’t recognize my life,” that just didn’t even begin to cover it. And in all the most meaningful of ways.

Yes, there were all these storybook things like I mentioned, the Oscars, the red carpet and all of that which is so fun. And there was also a new level of love and an entire new stratosphere of freedom and possibility and family and just another whole world, worlds, opening up.

The other thing I love so much about this story is that this woman is someone who, as I mentioned, had been through things. She had really been through things. She had walked through fire so courageously and she would tell you too, it was also so hard.

So, she had every reason – no one would begrudge her if she were jaded or if she said, “You know what? I’ve had dreams, hopes, desires, visions for my life dashed and smashed and I’m tired and I’ve worked really hard and I just don’t want to exhaust myself.”

She could have said all of those things. And yet, she leaned in again to possibility, into, “What would freedom be like?” She allowed herself to use her imagination, to have a leap of imagination, to ride on the back of imagination as it leapt. She allowed herself to dream. She allowed herself the excitement of possibility.

And without needing to nail down the how or the why, that dreaming itself, that use of tapping into the energy of the imaginal. That was a form of planning. Not analytical planning, not, “Let’s chart this all out, let’s make this all happen,” but dreaming and the imagination as a way of planning, as an alternative to the hyper-unhealthy masculine approach of, “Let’s logic this out. Let’s be completely rational. Well, let’s now limit our possibilities because probabilities are noes,” none of that.

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And again, this is never to disparage analytical thinking or logic. We can deploy them to our benefit and in service, and a healthy marriage to our intuition, to the feminine, to the intuitive, to the spiritual, to the creative.

The world can and does actually work like that. And that's also why I so loved the conversation I had with this woman this morning, and all the conversations I've had this week, that I get to have every week, that we always have in the mastermind, because it is so important to have these conversations together, to remind ourselves that these ways that are our strengths, this way of planning where we rely on dreaming, where we rely on leaps of imagination, where we allow ourselves, no matter how old we are, how much we've been through, how many disappointments or failures we've racked up, how many time sour hearts have been broken, how many times our dreams haven't come true yet, that we come back together and tap into this energy of possibility, that we lean into the imagination.

Because I know, the people that I work with, something that they are sometimes reluctant to - they say they confess it, like there's something to confess. There's nothing to confess. It's a gift to own when they're like, "You know what? I think this is how I actually work best. I work best with the imagination. I work best by dreaming as a form of planning. I work best when I allow myself possibilities, wildly improbable possibilities again. It makes me come alive."

And it works. And when we don't have sustained connection with our knowing that this works, we fall out of it. And then we're like, "Oh, well the rational mind says actually it doesn't work." But it's not that it doesn't work. We've just fallen into a disconnect. It's not a muscle we've been using. Or we've allowed it to atrophy.

But when you're in community, it's reinforced then in community. And then, also what happens, is that it feels safe to be this way. It is normalized to be this way. You recognize yourself in others and it amplifies your own gifts. It allows you seeing the gifts in others as they unlock them, allow you to

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unlock gifts that maybe you never realized you had until you unlock them, and then it's like meeting an old friend. It's like coming home.

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. Work with your imagination. Coach with me. Dream with me. Call in the energy of possibility with me.

And this, by the way, is something that I'm going to have on tap and in full force over the next several months, in the coming year through my work in the Art School and private work. We have so many opportunities for you to join in on this conversation, this movement, this energy.

We have opportunities that are free, like the podcast, and there are going to be other free resources as well that are so delicious and nourishing and will edify and feed your creative soul. We're going to have things that start as low as \$27 and then, as always, my most intensive work, the one-on-one work, the mastermind work, and just a range of offerings in between because I really want to help you to trust yourself, to move into that place where you know what you know, where you have permission to believe in yourself deeply and to know that your trust in yourself and your dreams and your desires matter.

And if you can do that, oh my god, the things that will be released within you. So, I want to provide as many different opportunities as I can for you to cultivate this. And some of those opportunities are going to be live, in-person events because I love the magic, the alchemy that happens in person.

There is another energy where two or more are gathered. Something powerful gathers as well. It happens every single time, whether it's a retreat or a workshop, without fail. And I love working with people who are down for that. And I love working with people who are down for, "Yes, I love my life right now, and in the best of ways, I would also love to open myself up

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to the kind of possibility where I wouldn't recognize my life a year from now, and at the same time, I'd have a deep soul recognition. I would know, yes, this is my true life. This truly is my ideal life. I'm living my truth. I'm expressing my potential. I am flowing the essence that I came to flow in the world.

So, again, I have retreats coming up. There is a mastermind retreat for, well, the mastermind in October around Lake Michigan because that energy there is incredibly powerful. Talk about creative and feminine and the nature and the mystical. I'm also hosting with RevelEleven a retreat in October, small intimate retreat that is going to knock your socks off. It will blow your mind what this experience is like.

And so, again, if, "I won't recognize my life a year from now," sounds delicious to you and in the kindest of ways where it's serving your soul and serving your life, that's a place to be, as well as just making sure you're on my newsletter because you'll receive the most current information that way. There's sometimes a lag into what I'm releasing via the podcast.

But anyway, those are some of the ways that you can work with me, coach with me in person, up close and personal. Oh yes, and one on one, I'm opening up so many new opportunities for one on one, whether you want one session or three sessions, you don't have to commit to six months.

All of these ways you can work with me, coach with me, and call in again this energy of possibility. And today, for the podcast, I want to invite you to play with those two anthems. They were songs of the soul really that my client had. Freedom and, "A year from now, I won't recognize my life."

I also want to share – I didn't share this earlier – that once she said that, there was a giddiness of an eight-year-old girl in that energy. And she said so too. She identified it too.

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And I wanted to offer that to you to maybe try on that child giddiness, that looking forward to a special occasion, a vacation, a holiday, that kind of giddiness. Because sometimes, people get afraid. They say, “I won’t recognize my life a year from now,” the negative bias of our brain pulls the imagination into catastrophizing.

It's not that. This is a place to be the master of your imagination with a light and playful touch, with the joy, the giddiness, the playfulness, the imagination, the sense of possibility and wonder and awe of your child self.

Tap into that energy. Try that on.” A year from now, I won’t recognize my life,” and the way she said it too, not a wish, but it was as if she had seen something. Not with her eyes, but with another sense, with her spirit, had seen something, had touched it, experienced it, felt it.

And so, she didn’t have to think it. She didn’t have to figure it out. She had a knowing of it.

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. As always, I appreciate each and every one of you listening and I love, love, love when you send shoutouts or connect via Instagram or direct message or email. I read and cherish them all.

And in today’s episode, I want to give a special shoutout to someone who has listened from the very beginning and has, from the very beginning, been such an enthusiastic listener and supporter of me and of the podcast. She shares with her own audience. And not only does she share, “Hey, I’m listening to this,” she always has something insightful to say about why and why its meaningful, which means so much to me.

So, Tammy Weisweaver, I want to surprise her with a one-on-one session with me. I also have the good fortune, the blessing of knowing Tammy in person. She’s a true powerhouse of a creative entrepreneur. She is a force of nature in our local community as a businesswoman and a force for good

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and an advocate for survivors of human trafficking, an advocate for an end to human trafficking.

I adore her work and what she is doing in the world and I so appreciate and am just grateful that a message like mine resonates with a woman like that. So, thank you, Tammy. And thank you to everyone who continues to share the podcast and share it with your friends, share it on social media. That really helps so much to reach a greater audience, obviously. And it also helps me because I'm someone who, frankly, needs to know this is connecting with people in order to be able to find my own words, in order to be able to find what's useful.

I have to be able to tap in with my imagination to the fact that there's a real person. And then it's such a joy when people that I've tapped into in my imagination show up in my real life.

I never get tired of that. And if you want to create your own version of, "A year from now I won't recognize my life," I strongly encourage you to apply for the Art School Mastermind or check out all of these opportunities to work with me either in upcoming workshops, at a retreat, or in one-to-one sessions.

You can learn more by visiting the show notes by going to my website. And as always, sometimes the easiest route is just to email us, support@leahcb.com and we will take very good care of you.

In closing, I want to make sure you know about a special opportunity that's happening September 27th. I'm offering a free workshop. It's all in the spirit of cultivating possibility and these leaps in your life by learning to leap with your imagination.

It's going to be an action-packed condensed version of the week-long possibility immersion that I offered a couple of years ago and that's now available in digital form, which is also on sale, I believe, this month of

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September. So, I'm very excited for that, particularly because this mini workshop on the 27th is going to be on the heels of me returning from going on a retreat for myself.

I am going on a writing retreat. And when I think about the things that are so good for my own imagination and my own dreaming, retreats like this, creative retreats like this are high up on that list.

So, I will be fresh off of that, ready to go and ready to support all of you in calling in those possibilities and cultivating – whatever your own anthem is. Maybe, “A year from now, I won't recognize my life,” doesn't make you come alive, doesn't feel like freedom to you. But finding out what is and being able to work more closely and back and forth and give you some more ideas and practices for how to tap into that energy, and then create from that place something that is truly yours and that lights you up from the inside out.

And if you're someone who thinks, “Gosh, I don't know. I have such a problem imagining anything. I get blocked. I don't know if I can do this,” I've got you. I have so many inroads and it's going to be light, it's going to be fun. It's also going to be profound.

So, wherever you are, we will meet you there and I sure hope to see you. I would love to see you on the 27th. And, at a bare minimum – and I don't think this is a bare minimum, I think it's actually very powerful and profound – what showing up for a workshop or retreat does is you create space in your life again for possibility and imagination. And that, my friends, cracks the door open for the energy of what wants to happen, for the energy of the spirit to come through, for the imagination to get in.

But in order to allow that, sometimes we need to make a point, we do need to make a point of stepping away from the squeeze of everyday life to carve out this place. And trust me, you have permission to do that. You are worth doing that for. You matter and your dreams matter.

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So whether it's my workshop or retreats, just make a promise to yourself to carve out some time where you retreat from the everyday life and everyday reality and create space to tap into imagination and intentionally create your life from that place.

Have a beautiful, creative week, my friends, and I look forward to talking with you next time.