

Ep #207: Telling the Story You Want to Tell with Sandra Chuma (Part 2)



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

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Sandra: Isn't it so magical that you don't have to decide? I think we're often told, "Find your purpose. Find your purpose." And then we put all this pressure on ourselves, like, "I don't know what my purpose is. I'm 20 years old. I'm 30 years old. Oh my gosh, I'm 40 years old and I don't know what my purpose is."

And I feel like, is there only one purpose in your life? Could there be all of these, like you said – and I'm not encouraging people to be flakes, because there is the other side, and everything is equal ends of the stick. There is the side of people who will be like, "I'll try this, and I'll try this, and I'll try this," and never really dedicate any effort to anything. But it has been, for me, in this phase of my life, one of the most freeing things is realizing, I don't know what I want to be when I get to be a grownup, and I'm just going to try different things and really give them a good effort. But I don't have to know the answer and there doesn't have to be this one thing that I am tied to for the rest of my life.

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That was a clip from a conversation I had with entrepreneur, speaker, coach, podcast host, and award-winning documentary filmmaker Sandra Chuma. We talked earlier this summer, June 2022, and you can hear the first part of our conversation in episode 206, last week's episode.

Last week, Sandra shared the story about how a little girl who is raised in a tiny mud hut in Zimbabwe with no running water or electricity then became a woman who built seven-figure and eight-figure businesses and who went on to get her master's degree from Columbia University in journalism, storytelling, documentary filmmaking. And while Sandra is generous in sharing her journey of success, she also goes deeper than that and shares with us too how she lost her way in terms of being in alignment with her purpose, and then how she found it again.

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For anyone listening who dreams of building a life that is not only successful in terms of all the external markers, but is truly aligned with their purpose and brings them joy and meaning, including and especially through adversity, there is so much wisdom in the stories Sandra shares. Enjoy.

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'm thrilled to bring you part two of this conversation with Sandra Chuma. I don't know about you, but I'm still thinking about the story she shared of her grandmother speaking her potential into her.

I mean, I've been thinking about that story for months, ever since I had the conversation with her earlier this summer. I'm thinking about it in terms of me as a mother. I'm thinking about it in terms of this podcast, really inviting me to think about how I can speak potential into all of you listening.

I'm thinking about it in terms of me for myself and I hope you are as well. And so, if you've been reflecting on this and have some insights you want to share, I'd love to hear them. I'd love to connect. You can find me on Instagram, @leahcb1. You can connect with me over email, just send us an email to support@leahcb.com.

And this idea of speaking potential into ourselves, into others, and how that relates so beautifully to the stories we tell is something that Sandra goes on to illuminate in this part two because she's talking about really believing you can live a life aligned with your own purpose. And she's not only

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speaking it, but it comes as testimony from someone who has done it, someone who has been there and been through fire. Burnout too is its own particular kind of fire. And someone who is doing it.

And I think this Art School audience – I know this Art School audience – is a community of those speaking potential into the whole of reality, that we can create this. We can create lives and success and art and dreams on our own terms from the inside out.

And in the doing of that, it is so important that we see examples of others doing it and that we share our hard-earned wisdom with and for one another. Because as we've said, it takes a village. And this is part of how a village gets to do it in the modern day, through a podcast and through these online connections, which is also how I met Sandra and have gotten to be able to speak with her closer since then.

So, enjoy this episode. Revel in the story that she shares that is hers, and then she is also – as master storytellers do – able to help the listener see how the story relates to their own life, and the kind of alchemy that stories can create, where we take the materials, the raw materials of our life and when we hold them close in and give them our reverent attention and explore and mine and really feel them and delve into the meaning there, how we can see that each of our lives are also art, and that we get to participate in the telling of our story and the making of our life into works of art.

Beautiful, messy, light, dark, complicated, full, rich art. I hope you enjoy part two of this conversation with Sandra Chuma.

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Sandra: It's story. Because that's how our brains are wired to comprehend, is through the power of story. And so, what we get to do is really, for ourselves, often we're not intentional about the stories we tell ourselves. And so, really choosing to take back that power and tell ourselves stories that are empowering that allow us to be powerful.

Leah: As you're speaking too, I know we were talking before we officially started the interview, that we both have the great joy of knowing Tererai Trent, another amazing storyteller, also from Zimbabwe. And I mean, many things that she has said have stuck with me, and one was about listening to her own grandmothers and aunts sit around and tell stories.

And she said they would often be stories of hardship and challenge and adversity. And she said, there was also them speaking to themselves and to one another. There was a way in which they could tell this story where they were not at all moving away from the challenge or the dark, and also empowering themselves through who they were acknowledging that they were, what they had learned from this, how it had shaped them, how it then became a story of their own heroine's journey.

And ultimately, even though they could be tragic stories, it was also empowering story and how important that was. I mean, that was stunning. And also, what struck me was that this was done in a community, that there is a story you tell yourself, but then there is, like, letting others hear you tell this story of yourself, moving through difficulty and then becoming stronger, wiser from it.

And then, there is being a listener, hearing another woman tell a story of adversity and hearing another woman not make it into a story of victimhood or self-deprecation, but instead honoring the true circumstances, the reality of that, but then also honoring the dignity of their experience, their strength, and their wisdom.

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Sandra: I love what you just said, and Tererai Trent, I call her tete, which in our language translates to Auntie. And she is such a powerful storyteller. And as I said, for us culturally, from where I'm from – and I know most for most African countries – storytelling is... actually, not even just African countries.

If you think about the fables that we tell, you know, kids and bedtime stories, if you think about why is it so important that we read kids stories and why do we all know these stories like Snow White and the Seven Dwarves and all of these, it's the power of story.

And I love what you just shared in that our stories are powerful. Oftentimes, we minimize our stories because it's your story, and so you can't go, "Well, yeah I just went through it, and you know..." and we often as well compare our stories and we're like, "Well, my story is not as tragic. I didn't have to come from this terrible circumstance and so my story can't be that important."

And what I want to say is that, wherever you are, whoever you are, there is always someone who can relate to your story. Not everyone has to have been through the worst tragedies for their story to be powerful. Sometimes, the stories are, "You know what? I have a hard time getting my two-year-old to..." do whatever difficult things two-year-olds do. That is a problem because there's another mom struggling with, "How do I get my two-year-old to learn how to brush their teeth, or whatever it is that you're trying to teach them." So our stories, we often minimize our stories, and we don't share our stories because we think, "Well who am I?"

You know, there's that wonderful poem from Marianne Williamson where she says, "We think, who am I to shine brightly?" And it's not about always having had to overcome terrible things. Sharing our stories of joy, sharing

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our stories of success, it's something that particularly for us women, we don't so very well.

We're taught to be humble. We're taught, don't brag, don't say about how great you are, or when you achieve great things, please don't share it with other people. Just minimize it.

So, we learn to always minimize ourselves, to always make our achievements small. And so, how then do we expect our children to know how to celebrate themselves, to celebrate the little victories, the big victories when we don't celebrate ourselves, when we minimize the things that we achieve.

And so, storytelling is so powerful, so powerful because, as you said, it's about you telling the story and the power that comes from that. It's about the person who is receiving that story and how they can see themselves.

You know, I'm telling you the story of, you know, my life and how I grew up in a mud hut and all of these things. Not everyone can relate to that. But there's often something, some little element that everyone can relate to in everyone's story.

I've never been a mom in the mid-southwest of America. I've never been a white woman. And yet, there are so many white women's stories that I resonate with, like, "Oh, that happened to her." And we see ourselves because we are more similar than we are different.

Our stories are the same. We all, wherever you're from, whatever it is you do, whatever your aspirations, we're all striving to be the best version of ourselves. We're all striving to have joy in our lives, and peace. We all want more for ourselves and more for our families.

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And so, our stories are so powerful because that, more than – if you think about the things that you remember from school, what do I remember about Pythagoras' theorem or anything like that? I don't. I remember stories.

I remember the teachers who taught me through story because that's how our brain comprehends. We all love – I'm sure you've done this where you've probably watched a movie in another language. And even with the subtitles, or even without subtitles, you can follow the story because story is how we all, as humanity, relate. We all can understand story.

Leah: And as you're speaking too, I'm thinking of – I mean, not all of my clients or listeners are women. There are many men too. And I think it benefits all of us when more women are included in the storytelling. Like, when half the population are also those telling the stories – and I get the chills when you said how women often minimize, how we often minimize our stories, either it wasn't so bad, or a success, "That's not really anything but you didn't see how hard it was," or, "But I didn't do this."

And to stop doing that, to really let the fullness, the full reality come through. And I want to tie that back to something else you said about having that pivotal moment of the burnout year, when you realized you weren't living aligned with your purpose. Because I think storytelling helps us align with our purpose because the stories that resonate are the stories that have the resonance of truth to them, even if they're fictional, even if it's made up, we can tap into something that's made up but still has an ultimate truth to it that makes the cord – and like you said, we're all connected. We have so many similarities.

When we are speaking from that place of truth, from the bedrock of our soul or our being, it strikes a chord of resonance in people of other color, other backgrounds, other ages. Because I wanted to ask you the big

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question, which I know is also unanswerable about what is your purpose? Because it's our essence, right?

It's like the ocean. You could bring me a bucket and be like, "This is part of the ocean." But it's not the ocean that is Sandra. And also, it's obvious that storytelling is part of your purpose. And I also love for the audience to hear this because I hope they are so encouraged to tell their stories, like full out, to touch that bedrock place and to not worry if you don't get there right away.

Because I know, for me, I had to get over so many things, like a law school professor that used to say, "Mrs. Badertscher, could you just get to the point and stop clearing your throat?" And I was like, you know what? For me to get closer to my purpose, I think of life moving in these concentric circles closer to the center. I'm still mining. I will never get to the point, dear professor.

But it is in this clearing out of things, and I think creating spaces for one another to do that, trusting that the other person has gold within them, that there is story, that there is gold, a vein of gold in each one of us and to hold spaces where we let one another mine and we let the gold come and we're speaking into one another the story that you have a Van Gogh, you have a divine seat, you keep digging, you keep telling your story. And the more we hear one another tell our stories, the more we are emboldened to do that and to tap into that as well.

Sandra: I feel like I should be clicking, saying hallelujah. It's exactly what you said, is that through us allowing ourselves to tell our stories, we embolden other women, other men to tell their stories. We allow them to see possibilities that maybe they might not have seen. And I love what you just said about, you'll never get to the end.

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You know, I think part of the other myth that we've been fed in our society is that you have a purpose, find your purpose, you know? I have a nephew. My nephew is five. And if sunshine could be a person, it would be him.

He's the most magical little being that there is. And when I ask him now at his age, what do you want to be when you grow up – which I think is such a terrible question to ask kids. We ask kids all the time, what do you want to be? Like there's this one thing that you can be, and you better hurry up and decide.

But at five years old, my nephew is like, "I want to be Spiderman, and then I want to marry Princess Jasmine from Aladdin." And I he has this whole plan of how he's going to marry Princess Jasmine and he's going to be Spiderman.

And I think, gosh, isn't it so magical that you don't have to decide? I think we're often told, "Find your purpose. Find your purpose." And then we put all this pressure on ourselves, like, "I don't know what my purpose is. I'm 20 years old. I'm 30 years old. Oh my gosh, I'm 40 years old and I don't know what my purpose is."

And I feel like, is there only one purpose in your life? Could there be all of these, like you said – and I'm not encouraging people to be flakes, because there is the other side, and everything is equal ends of the stick. There is the side of people who will be like, "I'll try this, and I'll try this, and I'll try this," and never really dedicate any effort to anything. But it has been, for me, in this phase of my life, one of the most freeing things is realizing, I don't know what I want to be when I get to be a grownup, and I'm just going to try different things and really give them a good effort. But I don't have to know the answer and there doesn't have to be this one thing that I am tied to for the rest of my life.

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And what you said is so magical in that when I see you and how you're expressing what your gifts are, I might be inspired by that. And when you share your gifts, I might be inspired by that. And I might see someone else who has a different gift and be inspired by that.

But ultimately, my gosh, it's through us sharing that, hey, look, this is what lights me up, and for me to look at it and say, "Does that light me up too? Let me try it. No, maybe that's not for me. But something else." It's only when we allow ourselves to share our stories.

Leah: Yes, and I love that you just used the phrase, "Lights me up." Because that to me, that also is a sign that some deep inner chord has been struck and rung that causes that to – I mean, it could be a throwaway phrase. But I think, if you sit with that and take a sacred orientation to it, we know what a lit human being looks like. We know what they feel like when we're around them.

And to let that be like a legitimate aspect of the conversation that you have with yourself about, who am I and what is my life? That that question of, "When am I lit from within?" that there is gold there, and there's such wisdom in our guidance there and it doesn't come across and it doesn't have an Alexa voice that says, "Oh, what lights you up would be to go get an advanced degree in thermodynamics..." you know.

But it gently calls us this way and that and it's mysterious and just, as you said, when we see other people lit up, it does something. It awakens. Let people, there's an awakening of the human spirit in the mind and the body. And when we are around other people that are lit in such a way, it's shared, it's contagious in a beautiful way, whether it's our mirror neurons or some sort of energetic wave we have yet to know how to measure.

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And I think that's such a – for people who are like, "Is it too selfish?" I'm like, no, how dare you not bring your light. How dare you not make that a legitimate way to live your life?

And so, I would love to hear, what's lighting you up? Or what are you curious about? What are you lit curious about?

Sandra: Gosh, what is lighting me up right now is something that – if we go back to the paradigm that we've all been brought up in, which is this is what it looks like, you go to school and then you get a degree and then you do all of these things.

And I followed that path, didn't feel lit up. And you said something so beautiful. We're afraid to go inward and we've been taught not to trust our feelings and to just use up here, use our logic, the logical mind and to follow the logical path. And for years, that's what I did. I followed the logical path.

And it was only literally, as I said before, the gift that came from me literally falling apart was I started to ask myself the question, "Okay, what is my purpose?"

And this is something I think oftentimes, we'll sit on the couch and be like, okay, take out our notepad, "What is my purpose?" And somehow the answer will come. And what I am learning is that purpose comes when you're doing what lights you up, number one. That is your clue. What are the things that light you up?

And it was the reason that I ended up going to learn storytelling. I went back to school when I was 40 years old to learn storytelling because I realized, what lit me up was telling stories.

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And when I originally went back to school, I went to journalism school, I was thinking that I wanted to be the next Christiane Amanpour, I wanted to go to warzones and tell the stories of these people. And I spent a wonderful two years at Columbia Journalism School, learned all of the tools, met Christiane Amanpour, met all these amazing people who are in that word, Barbara Walters, all of these people.

And what I realized is that, first of all, it reinforced in me and really reignited in me the love of story and storytelling and the power of storytelling. But I realized there's no one way to tell stories. It doesn't have to be on CNN or Fox News for you to tell stories.

The other thing that really reignited in me, and again when I was reflecting on my life and the power of story in my life, is that it really comes down to what is it that lights you up? And for me, it wasn't being in war zones, but what did light me up was, how can I help other women realize this? How can I help other women step into their power?

And through me helping other women, it's helping me step into my power. So, what does it look like? And oftentimes too, this is where we kind of come unstuck because we want it to be in a nice, neat box. And when I was talking to coaches, like, what's that going to look like and what are the programs that you're going to offer? And all of these questions.

And what I'm learning is to allow myself to just do the things that bring me joy in following this path. Of course, there's the logical side, which is, "Okay, you have to make money because you have to keep a roof over your head." But what I am really loving stepping into is using my voice, what I've learned, my experiences, sharing my story to help other women find their voice and share their stories.

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Leah: That strikes a chord in me, of truth, that yes, that comes from the bedrock of your soul, absolutely.

Sandra: You know something else, if I may just add here, Leah, this is something – and I don't want to sit here and be like, "I am a guru and I have figured all of this out." I am still a work-in-progress and I think that is something that we have to allow ourselves to be, literally until the day they put you in the ground, you are a work-in-progress.

And it's allowing ourselves to realize that you can be a masterpiece while still being a work-in-progress as well. Because oftentimes, especially – I work with women who are self-sabotaging and feeling imposter syndrome, and oftentimes that comes from us feeling like we have to have everything perfectly figured out and we have to know all the answers, and only then are we worthy to go out into the world and share a message.

You are perfect as you are. Wherever you are, whatever challenges you're facing, whatever triumphs you've had, there is someone who is a step behind who is looking to you for inspiration. Wherever you are, your story has power. And that's been the permission I have had to give myself to say, "I don't have to have all the answers. I don't have to have it all figured out." That should not be what stops me from putting my work out into the world.

Leah: Thank you so much for saying that. I'm so grateful that you wove that. That, to me, speaks to this new paradigm of possibility that is going to allow so many more people to step forward and express their gifts and not, again, just leave that call unanswered to leave that potential locked within them. Because there is a false myth that you have to have it all together, that the only way to be an artist, a change agent, a force for good, a beautiful human being is to have it all figured out and be flawless and be a guru.

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And I have no interest in that. Like, I've been down the overachiever perfectionist route, and I know that my soul withers on the inside. And it can be a scary thing to step forward as an artist. And I don't know what it is like to be a man, so I'm just going to say, as a woman, and say this is what I am doing, and this is where I'm offering to help other people and to create a business around that.

So, to not just say you're doing it. Because for me, it was another evolution too, to be paid for it. And how dare you be paid for it when you are not a flawless human, highly pedigreed, degreed person yet? And I don't want that life for myself. I don't want that life for anyone. And I don't want to model that for my clients either.

And so, I'm so grateful that you shared it because I think, oh my gosh, you've got tremendous cred. Like, the life you've lived. And so, I think for people to hear, she too is saying, from my humanity, all of it. And not from some false perfection or a guru's pedestal, but it's from my humanity, all of it, that this is where my purpose flows. And encountering others, connecting with other people in that place is where the purpose flows.

Sandra: And oftentimes – and I'll speak from my perspective – when I think back, the reason I wanted to go to Columbia Journalism School, of all the places, was because oh my gosh, if I can go to Columbia, which is the only Ivy League school that offers journalism, then I can say that I have this degree from this pedigreed school, then that will make me worthy to be a storyteller. That was literally the brain's sentence that was going in my head.

And that's where we often stop ourselves. And it is, if I could say one thing to everybody, you are worthy now. You don't need a piece of paper to say that you are qualified. Because all you're doing with a piece of paper – I mean, no disrespect. I'm here for pieces of paper. But all it is, is you're

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parroting what somebody else told you, that this is the way that you do it and that's the right way.

Why is that the right way? And so, oftentimes, we don't do the thing, like you said, because we feel like, "Well I don't have the qualification and I don't have the 20 years of experience."

And the other way that we stop ourselves is when something comes easy, when something is so natural, when it just flows from us, then we think, "This is so easy, I can't charge for it." So, especially as women, then we're like, "No, it was easy," and we have to complicate it. We have to make it hard because, "But it just came to me easily."

And I wonder if we could just allow ourselves to believe that the reason it came to easily to you is because that is your gifting, that is your soul saying to you, "This is what you're here to do. This is what you're supposed to share with others."

Because the things that to me come easily are challenging for other people. It is for me to get up on a stage and speak as, "Tell me now what you want me to speak about and I can speak." For somebody else, that's the most anxiety-inducing thing ever.

I find it very hard. I'm a terrible cook. And other people, it's like my niece is 12 years old, makes these creations that literally just blow my mind. That's her gifting. So, should I make her wrong that, "Oh well, it's easy for you. You're like, that can't be something you can charge for."

And so, I wish we would get out of that paradigm of feeling like we need to have achieved so much for us to be worthy, to share, feeling like we need to have all these pieces of paper for us to be worthy to share, or feeling like

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we need to suffer, it has to have been hard, we need to have ground for us to be able to now charge for it.

The reason that it is easy for you is because that is your soul's purpose, and that is what you are here to share, and that is what you're here to value, to value your value, that this was the gifting that you were given. Share it with the world in exchange for your value.

Leah: Value your value, that's beautiful. So, I know you clearly communicate your work and your purpose through story and on stage. And what are other ways that you're working with women these days? What's lighting you up in terms of stage and what else?

Sandra: You know, I love to speak. I love to work with women one on one. I love small group containers. I love doing small group containers because what I have learned is that the sum of the parts is so much more than the parts individually. And so, oftentimes, especially when I'm in a small group container, yes, I come as the leader of the container, but the values often in what the other women share, the story.

I have one version of what my life looks like. But hearing these women share their stories of adversity, share their stories of triumph, that's where often the most powerful transformations happen.

I also love doing one on one because I think that there's a power, when you can have that connection with someone and really be able to walk with them, to walk with them, to walk through.

And one of the things too that oftentimes the reason we don't do the thing, we don't put ourselves out, is fear. And what I love doing with women is being able to help them recognize that you can, opposite ends of the stick again, you can absolutely feel the fear and still do the thing. And so, I love

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being able to walk with women on their journeys as they step into whatever their version of their most extraordinary life is.

Leah: And I'm going to be sure to include links for people to find you in the show notes. Can they contact you for speaking and mentoring and groups?

Sandra: Absolutely, anything that is in my wheelhouse, anything. I'd love for women to reach out to me, whatever it is, whether it's for speaking, whether it is for mentorship. I'm really stepping more into that one-on-one mentorship and small group coaching.

I also just love to hear from people. It's one thing to share your story, it's one thing to say words, but oftentimes, I don't know that resonates. And so, I love hearing from people when something resonates or an ah-ha that they had or even if they want to share their experience and say, "This is what I've been through." I love hearing stories. I think stories are so powerful.

Leah: It reminds me of something you said a little earlier about our purpose becomes more clear through the doing and through the interacting because I feel too, when people reach out, there's always what I think would be helpful or valuable, but then it's like the moment a real human reaches out and says, "Oh this podcast... something lights up in me. Something comes alive and goes, "Oh, I've got more where that came from, if that's what's helpful."

And I agree that other people's stories activate us as well. And I want to say, my intention is that I move all podcast interviews onto YouTube. I'm not there yet, so this is audio. So, for all of you who cannot see Sandra, another of her gifts is she's a captivating presence. Your energy is incredible, and it is also a part of your gift.

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And so, I can only imagine, when you're on a stage and then also in a group, I just want to mirror and affirm that.

Sandra: I stopped myself at the beginning of this interview, when we first came on, because yes we're in mutual groups and we've seen each other before. But I truly wanted to say to you, at the very beginning, you have the most beautiful energy.

Like literally, that's what I felt, was like, you have the most welcoming, warm, just it felt like I was coming to this space where I was just being held in a warm embrace. And so, you have a beautiful energy. Thank you for seeing it in me and I see it in you. You have such a beautiful energy. It's so gentle. I feel like...

Leah: Oh, thank you. Thank you so much. Oh gosh, I'm getting a little choked up. Like I have said I could just talk to you for hours and listen to you talk for hours. Truly captivating and with such soul and grit, all of it. Thank you for sharing your presence, your story, your work, and your time with me. For me, this is delightful that I get to spend this morning with you. And I would love to have you back on because there is an area in particular that is like, oh gosh, I don't know if I'll have time for this. But it's the unconscious stories that we tell ourselves.

Because I know you and I have another mutual interest in the unconscious and hypnosis. And so, that would be a juicy conversation, if you're up for it.

Sandra: Absolutely. I would love to come and talk about that, and how we start to – again through the power of story but also how do we start to reprogram our subconscious mind to – as you know, most of what we do, I think the estimate is 95% of everything we do, we think we're making choices, but 95% of what we do is driven subconsciously. So, I'd love to come back and have that conversation.

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Leah: Oh, wonderful. Wonderful. Well, thank you so much, Sandra.

Sandra: You're a delight. Thank you so much for having me. Thank you so much for wanting to hear my story and giving me a platform to share. I appreciate you.

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Now, 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, here it is this week. What lights you up? What brings you joy? I am in alignment with Sandra when she says that a clue to our purpose is in what lights us up. It's what brings us joy. And so often, those are things that we dismiss as frivolous, as superfluous, as irrelevant, or as the things that we'll eventually get to someday but, wink-wink they're not really necessary, right?

No, beginning there, beginning with what lights you up as the beacon, as the clue, as actually it. What makes you come alive? What makes your soul sing? What delights you? What brings you such joy?

Maybe it doesn't tell you, "Okay, this then is completely the whole and entire description of your purpose." But maybe it points you in the right direction. And from there, you keep following, closer and closer. You've heard other podcasts where we've talked about the magic of following the golden thread. So similar.

So, again, what lights you up? What brings you joy? And sit with yourself for a moment and see if you can feel, to your knowing, how this leads back to your purpose, originates from your purpose, is actually your purpose calling you home.

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Thank you for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. You know, one of the themes emerging from a lot of the coaching I've been doing lately both one on one and in the mastermind group, has been around people getting clear on what lights them up and what is in their zone of genius, what is aligned with their purpose, what brings them joy, and what they have been tolerating as anything less than that, as a distraction, as a disruption from their desire to be in deep engagement with what matters in their life and a deep desire to rid themselves of anything that distracts from that, but that which the world seems to insist upon as necessary, but that goes against the grain of their soul, that grates against the frequency of their soul.

So, these clients have all been following the call to what lights them up, to what brings them joy, to what is truly aligned with them and aligned with trusting their own instincts and trusting their own intuition, and with fabulous results.

And so, if this is the kind of life that you want to create, check out the offerings that we have in the Art School. Applications are always open for the Mastermind. The classic Art School, which I have been reflecting upon and reimagining and redesigning for the last year is back and better than ever in 2023. So, you can hop on the waitlist for that. Enrollment will open in November for those early birds who want to get their ducks in a row for the year 2023.

And also, if you're on my newsletter, you'll be the first to know about any upcoming free workshops as well as opportunities to work with me one on one, or perhaps to do something like a VIP day, where we work together exclusively from eight in the morning until five at night and then we go out for a nice dinner, so it's my full attention on you and what you most want to create.

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So, if you'd like to explore any of those options, you can always check out my website, www.leahcb.com, connect with me on Instagram, @leahcb1, or email us with any questions, support@leahcb.com.

To close today, I really want to highlight what Sandra has said about the power of story and the power of story in community. I mentioned too that this was a thread that Tererai Trent and I discuss in our podcast episode that Dr. Trent Discusses in her book, *The Awakened Woman*. And that I see again and again as an element of this paradigm of the flourishing thriving creative.

What drew me initially so Sandra, the way she talked about creating from the divine feminine, that this aspect of community is an element, an inextricable element of that process, that it actually allows for the amplification, the exponential compounding of one's gifts, that there is a different kind of alchemy that happens in this kind of community. I see it over and over again with my own groups and I hear it in the stories of women who have transcended typical bounds of success and are really flourishing and have unleashed their potential and now that's overflowing its banks into the lives of others.

So, think about that for yourself. Where can you cultivate and create this kind of ideal? Keep your standards high, everyone. You don't have to compromise here. For instance, I do not compromise in my containers, in my communities, for the standard of energy.

And that kind of loving, ruthless love and exclusivity absolutely brings out the best in everyone there. So, there is no compromise in what I'm talking about here. So, for you, what would be the ideal village, the ideal community? How can you curate that? How can you explore cultivating that?

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And allow for trial and error without judgment. Just because one thing doesn't work, doesn't have to mean anything bad about you or them. It just means you're fine-tuning and you're calibrating your sense of where your village is and what it actually looks like and what the elements are.

But if any part of you is on the fence and still thinks you need to do this all on your own, let this be your invitation to reconsider that. Or let this be just kind of the boot in your behind that kicks you squarely over it.

I know I drug my feet too long for this and it was because I was thinking I would have to compromise myself, I would have to tone myself down, somehow the fullness of me, everything I am wouldn't be accepted. And again, that kind of compromise is not what we're talking about.

So, allow that possibility for yourself. Allow for the potential of a village where you feel a kind of connection with others and feel their support and the amplification of this magic village math, where the whole is truly greater than the sum of the parts. And really, when you're there, that whole. A good test will be it blows your mind and your heart wide open.

Have a mind-blowingly beautiful week, everyone and I look forward to talking with you next time.