

Ep #208: YOUR Creative Process



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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The creative process is intuitive and nonlinear. I believe that each of our unique essences informs our creative process. And part of the beauty of this work and the mystery and journey of it is to get in touch with and discover your own unique creative process. And yes, that begins with trusting that you do indeed have one.

Beginning with that trust that you do indeed have one will allow you to observe how it's directing you, how it's guiding you. And what I want to talk about in today's episode is one small piece of that. And that is how to do all of the things, routine, not routine, calendar, no calendar, structure, no structure when it comes to allowing you to unleash your own creative genius and become the most fully expressed, self-actualized artist and thriving, flourishing human that you can be.

You are listening to *The Art School Podcast*, a show for artists and creatives who want to become the next greatest version of themselves. Learn how to cultivate an extraordinary way of being and take the mystery out of making money, and the struggle out of making art. Here is your host, master certified life coach, artist, and former lawyer, Leah Badertscher.

Hello, everyone, and welcome to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. So, I am recording this for you in mid-October. Again, I've just recorded two other episodes right after my retreat, and so this topic of the creative process being intuitive and nonlinear is at the forefront of my being, as is the fact that the creative process is something to be experienced with your whole self.

I mean, that was the point of having an immersive, embodied experience like the Art School Mastermind retreat. And I brought in elements that would nourish and nurture mind, body, spirit for every single person there so that all of them felt deeply seen, known, cared for.

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So, I had one surprise guest that did beautiful singing bowls and sound healing that was profound. Unexpectedly, even though we had high expectations, it just blew them out of the water.

I had a beautiful chef. I mean, the meals, shoutout Blair Carothers. Out of this world. A lot of people said, “Oh my gosh, the chef alone, the house alone, the sound healing session alone, the massages alone...” we also had gifted bodywork there. Any of those individual elements, and there are also more elements, would have been transformative.

And also, there was another element to this container that was more invisible but definitely part of the design. And that was that it was immersive, meaning we would all be together in this space, unplugged from the quotidian schedule and life and daily routine, and with intentional elevation toward the sacred and towards opening to the greatness and the creativity that everybody individually and collectively is tapped into. All of us focusing that way, connecting up that way, and also interconnected.

And one of the things I most wanted for them was to be able to have a sustained experience of their genius self, of their creative self, of their artist self, of their sacred self, a sustained, felt experiential experience, mind, body, spirit of their true self, of their true nature, which because it was so radically loved and nurtured and taken care of would feel safe to not only poke its head out, but to emerge fully.

Let the rubies and gold and everything, the holy water pour from its essence. And as one of my clients said on a call right after the retreat she was saying it wasn't only safety, it wasn't only love. Those seem like minimum baselines. She's like, “It was radical nurturing, radical love, radically being cared for, just torrents pouring on of the love, of feeling so deeply known and held.”

And I want, even though we're using radical, I think, to bypass our brain's conventionally, how we've absorbed conventional ideas about, “That's

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good enough. Who are you, some kind of spiritual diva?” to really get it across that no, this is how the human spirit flourishes and to allow what we’re now calling radical love and radical nurture, to hold the vision that that moves into the mainstream, into everybody as one day being the minimum baseline, just the way we are for ourselves and for one another.

And again, I wanted everyone to have a sustained experience of this in mind, body, and spirit. Hours upon hours, a few days linked together, because that kind of exposure, you can’t help but be changed. And that’s what I have heard over and over again, that that was such, like an elevation happened and you could never go back.

One of the women said, first thing when we got on our call post-retreat was, “I am a different person.” And another woman said, “I’m not the woman I was before I came to the retreat.”

And that is the experience, that’s the inevitable when you touch your true self for an extended period of time. And that’s why I believe so strongly, until the day I die, that the way to evoke potential and awaken the spirit is through this radical nurture, that the genius is already there, it’s cultivating the conditions and tending to and healing our human ecosystem to allow ourselves and the seeds of the divine to thrive through us.

And so, what does this have to do with a schedule and a calendar and a routine? Oh so much. I could talk about this for weeks and get quite impassioned by it.

What I want to say today is, so often, people are trying to figure out, what is the best structure? What is the best structure to nurture my inner genius? What is the best structure for allowing this book to flow into the world, this new body of work that is perhaps a painting, perhaps an album?

And when we ask those questions, which are great questions, a lot of times though, where our mind immediately goes for the answer is to our post-

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industrial revolution, capitalist society that's driven by – also we're on the seven-day week and 24-hour calendar, five-day workweek, nine to five, eight to five, four to six, whatever it is, our brain goes to linear timelines and boxes and structures. But, as I said at the beginning, the creative process is intuitive and it is nonlinear.

And a question I often get is, okay, now I am in a place where I'm believing it's okay to give myself permission to be all of these things, which before I thought couldn't coexist, like I couldn't be a doctor and an artist, or I couldn't be a lawyer and a healer and an artist and a mom and on the PTA. But now I'm on board that I can be all these things, that I can be spiritual and pragmatic. I can be affluent and prolific AF, and I can also whatever it is that you think conflicts with that.

And they're like, so I'm trying to do all these things, then what essentially I hear them doing next is they've split themselves off into many different categories. You know, the person who has to take people to soccer practice and to ballet and make it to faculty meetings and also have a meeting with the publisher and agent, oh yeah, and somewhere in there too also write the book.

And the way their brain is trying to conceptualize of making all of this happen is by continuing to chop up themselves into these categories and pieces, and also trying to chop up time in their days into categories and pieces.

So, here is what I want to say to that. That's a place to pull back, and instead, because your creative process is intuitive and nonlinear, access your creativity, that intuitive nonlinear gift for how it most wants to proceed.

And to abridge and make this a digestible topic for an episode, I'll say that oftentimes, people are trying to break things out into little chunks, which is great and I've done that at times too, small steps here and there. And there's a time for that, a time when just writing every day is what you need

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to do to stay in conversation, a time when art journaling every day is what you need to do.

And then, there will be a time when a part of you feels like it is screaming, “I can’t fracture my attention this way in that anymore. I want something more.” And so, to pay attention to those places where you’re feeling extreme discomfort, I will say.

I had one say, I don’t know if it’s just my discomfort at – as I said, she resonated with the fumbling podcast. She’s like, maybe yeah, I can see that embracing the fumbling works, and then there’s also a part of me that just wants so much more, that wants to move into mastery.

So, we had a conversation about that and really leaning into trusting her intuition, that it wanted more than just carving out kind of what was remaining in the week for her to do her art and her writing.

And what that can look like – it will look different for everyone, but what I would suggest is that you take convention off the table. You take what’s reasonable and rational off the table and you ask yourself, what is this work desiring?

Because the work that wants to come through you, the spirit of the work is desiring a corpus. It’s desiring a body. We talk about things having, you know, a body of work. Well, that which wants to come through you wants to have a body in the world.

So, maybe that body is having a public show of your artwork, whereas you’ve never done that before. Maybe that body, for you, is going to a week-long painting retreat where you paint for 10 or 12 hours a day, you don’t have to cook for anyone, you don’t answer any emails, you don’t post on Instagram. You just give yourself that immersion in the art, in the spirit of what wants to happen through you, in the craft.

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I do believe that you can write a book in an hour, a week. I do believe you can move your painting practice ahead profoundly by spending five hours a month, 20 hours a month. And I also know from personal experience in working with so many artists and creatives that there are times when that which wants to be made through you is louder and is wanting more.

And giving it more gives you an opportunity to stay in flow longer. And that's an entirely different conversation, but flow is such a regenerative state and it also gives you an opportunity to move past just having the warm-up period and instead move deeper into your art and to a place where you start to feel more mastery of the craft and you aren't always having to close up shop right when you're getting warmed up and right when things feel good.

This is one of the reasons I went on an immersive writing retreat recently, because I was craving sustained attention for just writing. And again, what I experienced is what I often experience when I get sort of sustained attention.

I feel that the creative in me is more solid and I feel more of the solidity of the body of the work that wants to come through me. It feels less like I have to go back in there and maybe making it up every time, and more like I get a true, experiential sense that no, there is something there, this work has a spirit. It has a body, flesh and bone and blood and it wants to live and walk in the world.

And that is something just frankly then, at this point, helps me come back and be able to write in a constrained, like an hour a day or a few hours a week. But going to a deeper well and having an immersive experience really helped to kickstart that, staying in a continued, sustained conversation with your creative work can do that.

And that's also one of the designs of the Art School, is to give people a structure outside of conventional ways and in a radially nurturing

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environment to stay in sustained conversation with their creative genius and with the work that wants to come through them, and to have that witnessed in a way where they are deeply known and deeply believed and the work is deeply revered and believed, that there's known to everyone in that space, that what's coming through has gold in it, has wisdom, has power, has beauty, has meaning, and we're continuing to nurture the artist and the environment so that that grows inevitably.

So, pay close attention to what your creativity, your creative process is telling you it wants and needs. There's genius in that. There is wisdom. And you have to be aware of the places where your rational mind wants to talk you out of that.

Because that makes about as much sense as if you had a dog and you were like, "Seriously, I fed you once this week. I took you for one walk." Or said that to your family.

Now, in certain instances we understand nature has rhythms and nature has wisdom to how it is best nourished and cared for. And so too does your creative nature. Your creative nature has wisdom, has intelligence and will tell you how to care for it so it can be most healthy and thrive and bear fruit and flower.

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. Thinking particularly about your structure for your creative work; is it serving you? Or do you feel like you're serving a structure, and then the rest of the time kind of beating yourself up that you're not doing better?

If you moved for a moment into a place of deep and radical trust of the wisdom and intelligence of your creativity and the creation that wants to come through you, how do they tell you to go about helping support the formation of the corpus of that work in the world, how to go best about building that work out in the world?

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What are the particulars? Do you need to say no to some other things and carve out time for this? Do you need a long weekend, a personal retreat? Do you need the structure of a mentor? Or maybe you do want the structure of a typical academic institution, or you want to make up your own. Maybe you want to explore something like the Art School or another coaching program or container.

But if you let everything be on the table and listened to your own creative process for its intuition, leaned into knowing its nature a little better, which doesn't operate, doesn't care one wit for an eight to five schedule, you know, five-day workweek, and hopefully you get restored over the weekend.

If you really were attuned to your own creative rhythms, then where could you relax and trust when it ebbed a little bit and where could you help support the flow?

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. If you want radical support and nurture, the kind that makes your creative genius and your creative dreams inevitable, then you will want to check out the Art School and the Art School Mastermind.

Applications are always open for the mastermind and the next round of the Art School is just around the bend in 2023, so now is the time to get on the waitlist and also sign up for my newsletter, www.leahcb.com to hear about the latest free workshops, one-to-one coaching offerings, and always a lot of love and nurture being poured into helping you live your most thriving, creative life.

Okay, y'all, I have a fun bonus coach with me. I mean, I laugh because I think this is fun, for today, around this topic of our creative process. And it's a low-hanging fruit exercise.

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I want you to think about things that currently either interrupt your work, disrupt your flow, or take creative energy that you would rather pour into your work, that you actually could eliminate today, this week. You actually could commit to a shift that would free up a lot of your mental, emotional, spiritual, imaginal energy, psychic real estate, to pour instead into your creative work that would actually create a more clear channel for that work to come through you.

So, one example, I had a client just today say, “I’m doing it. I am going off social media.” I had another client say, “A retreat like we just did, that must be part of my life now at least twice a year, if not four times a year, that it’s a new nonnegotiable.”

Another client said, “This cooking and grocery shipping thing I thought, well I like it, I don’t mind it. But now, after having experienced being so well cared for and nurtured and not having to think about that every day, I’m definitely either cooking ahead and then also moving some money from other places, budgeting, cutting out one thing, so no additional spend necessary, although we’re all for that too, into this place of, you know what? It is actually possible for me to have somebody else prepare six meals a week for our family. I can do that right now.”

Maybe for you, it starts with one meal a week. Maybe for you it starts with something like the social media exercise, cutting that out. Whatever it is, trimming those things that keep you bound to some sort of time cycle or life cycle or other sort of hamster wheel that pull your spirit and your mind out of the realm of depth and imagination and creativity and into some other place that doesn’t feel good to you, it doesn’t feel deeply nourishing and it leaves you feeling malnourished.

So, look for those low-hanging fruit opportunities and also, if you have a desire for a grand gesture like an immersive experience, go for it. Give yourself permission to do that. You will be repaid 100-fold the experience of feeling your creative self, your genius more solid within you, is the

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experience, the dream solid within you, is the experience of knowing, “That thing I thought was out of reach, I can do it. I really can do it.”

And that is what I want and is possible for each and every one of you. Have a beautiful week, my friends, and I will talk with you next time.