

THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

Worksheet for Cathy Heller | Being Creative in Spite of Your Day Job (Episode 78)

When you're trying to make it as a creative force in any industry, you have to know how your skills can be applied in a way that they're useful to people who can pay you -- otherwise, you're just a hobbyist. But you also have to strike the right balance without selling out what you consider to be your artistic integrity.

Cathy Heller moved to Los Angeles to make it as a musician, but it took her a while to find this balance and discover how she could be of use to Hollywood instead of assuming creating art for art's sake and her own reasons would pay the bills. In addition to being a licensing machine with her songs being played in your favorite movies, television shows, and commercials, Cathy is the creator and host of popular podcast [Don't Keep Your Day Job](#). She joins us for [episode 78](#) to share her story and her wisdom.

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Let the Water Run

The creative process doesn't always occur naturally; we have to make space in our lives for it to happen, which often requires us to disengage from our routines and the noise caused by constantly being plugged in. Often this is difficult in the early stages, as what we initially create may not be up to our standard of excellence. Cathy drew an analogy to cultivating creativity after a long period of stagnation as akin to turning on the water at a cabin that hasn't been occupied for a while and finding that it runs rusty brown. If we're aware that it just takes some time before the clear water returns, we can dismiss its initial murk.

What are you currently doing to trigger your creativity? When was the last time you went to a museum, a recital, or just spent time in the natural world? Start scheduling consistent time to unplug, and allow yourself some latitude to let the water run brown during the creative process.

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We Are at an Empathy Deficit

Seth Godin suggested to Cathy that any successful endeavor has “radical empathy” at its core. Cathy and I discussed the bottleneck of not feeling worthy or capable in our endeavors, often referred to as impostor syndrome.

Between our lack of empathy and inner-doubt we may be unable to connect with our “audience,” but this is just a matter of overcoming our own ego and recognizing what it is that *it* wants, rather than what we want.

Whether you are self-employed or work for someone else, take a moment and determine what the pain point of your customers is. What do they need? Start caring about what *they* find beautiful, rather than what you do. How can you connect with them on a deeper level to meet that need?

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Pivot

Cathy came to California in search of a career in the music industry, but it came about in a way that she hadn't initially planned. Traditionally, she assumed she would be signed to a recording contract, and that would continue on in perpetuity. When it didn't work out that way, she pivoted. She started a podcast, she started a talent agency, and she started teaching because that is what the market was looking for.

How often do we remain rigid to our ideals that we formed in our youth? We form beliefs about what “love” should look like, not realizing we could find a better love if we allowed for some flexibility in our aim. On introspection, do you find that your mindset is generally open to other possibilities, or fixed on a singular outcome? If more the latter than the former, challenge those beliefs as they enter your mind, and pivot toward other opportunities. Ask yourself, “what is the universe calling for that I can provide?”

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Multi-hyphen It

Cathy says that “alignment is the new hustle,” so adopt an attitude of trying to serve in the way that you were made to serve.

As you’re seeking to find that one *thing* that is *your* thing, start doing more things in general, and listen to the feedback that "the universe" is giving you. Multi-hyphen it, as they say in Hollywood, then listen to the feedback that the universe is giving you. What is your personal “singer-actor-director” title, and what action are you taking on it?

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In God We Trust -- All Others Bring Data

Cathy suggested that we shouldn't be so quick to define our brand; there are no shortcuts in the process. She then gave an anecdote of a hospital visit during which her heart was monitored for 30 minutes. The probe being used was uncomfortable, and she questioned that if her heart was beating 60-100 times per minute, why they needed to monitor for such an extended period. The doctor informed her that he wanted to be sure of his assessment by gathering as much data as he could.

Remember that clarity *follows* repeated action. We need to capture more data in order to get an accurate representation of what we are good, or possibly bad at. How often are we stopping just short of the goal line because we are unaware of our proximity to it? List some recent endeavors that you gave up because they seemed fruitless, pick one to re-apply yourself to for the next 30 days, and if it proves unsuccessful, pick another and put 30 days more effort on it.

Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here](#).

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About



Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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