Facing your Inner Critic with Tara Mohr with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1
Facing Your Inner Critic
(upbeat music) - Hi everybody. It's Liana from Creativebug and we have a very special guest with us here today. We have Tara Moore, who is the author of "Playing Big." - Hi, I'm so happy to be here. - Hi Tara. We've been big fans of Tara's for years here at Creativebug. Ursula, our CEO actually read your book, and it completely changed the way that she was thinking about her life and business and then she passed it along to everybody else and now we're all big converts of "Playing Big." So we're so happy to have you here. - Thank you. I'm so happy to be here. I love Creativebug. I love what you guys are up to and I'm excited for our conversation. - So now tell me what you do or tell everybody, I suppose, what it is that you do and what "Playing Big" is. Let's give them a little ground work to look from. - Okay, yes. Well, maybe we'll start from the backstory, which for me it goes back about 10 years ago, and I had started a little coaching practice, doing life coaching and professional coaching mostly for women. And I didn't know really what my focus would be. I was still figuring all that out. But what kept happening was these fabulous women clients would come into my office and I would just see, they're so talented, they're so brilliant, they're so caring and conscientious, the way we all feel about our dear women friends, and yet what I would hear from them again and again is, well, I wanna take that step but I'm not ready yet. Or, if that business idea was a good idea, wouldn't someone else be doing it already? And that pattern of like, wait, you're so incredible and why aren't you going forward in all the ways you're ready for. That was really striking and so that became the focus of my work, is what happens to us that we ended up playing so small relative to our dreams and our goals and how do we play bigger? - And we're such great best friends. I feel like any one of us can say to a friend in that moment like, no, but you could do it, but it's really hard to say that to ourselves. - Absolutely, we see it in others and especially as girls, we're socialized to encourage other people and lift them up and see the brilliance in them, but make sure that we're not owning it too much in ourselves. And you work a lot, I know, with women in all sorts of phases of their life and in different areas of their life. So in business or within their own personal growth and their families, basically helping people to take the next step. (indistinct) - Yes, and my definition of "Playing Big" is it's being more loyal to your dreams than to your fears. So those could be personal dreams for your life, like where you wanna live and how you wanna live. It could be a career dream, it could be the dream of a project you wanna start in your community. And for a lot of us and one of the reasons we're here talking today is there are also these creative longings, like an old creative passion we wanna reclaim or something we just feel called to try, or something we love and wish we were going further with but something's holding us back. And so playing big just means really living into what you truly want in all areas of your life without fear and self doubt holding you back. - Right, and one of the reasons why we really wanted to have you here is because we get messages all the time. Actually Faith, Faith is always on Instagram and on her gallery and comments section. She gets all excited when people write in, so keep writing in everybody. But people write in all the time and are telling us, "Creativebug classes helped me walk through a door I opened years ago." Or, "I'm ready to take the next step but I'm not sure how." And I even have these moments of like, well, I do wanna do this but I'm not really sure how, or it involves technology. And that feels a little out of reach for me. So we have these ways of talking ourselves out of things or only allowing ourselves so much room to be creative and explore and then we talk ourselves out of it. So we

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thought we would bring you here and people are probably like, we usually do craft demos and stuff like that. And it's like, no, we're gonna do- - Not today. Our hands are empty on the material. (indistinct) But what we talk about today applies to every artistic thing you do go going forward, right? - It's true, and so many areas of our lives, and this book, so "Playing Big" if you haven't heard of it, you should definitely check this out. And one of the early chapters in the book and one of my favorites is about the inner critic. And so we thought rather than trying to cover everything that's in the book, 'cause it's a lot, we thought we would focus a little bit on this inner critic that we all have. And so maybe you could tell us a little bit more about that and how you see it manifest itself a lot in creative types. - Yeah, yeah, well, the first thing is just that I love to talk about this voice of self doubt as the inner critic, which is a thing in itself because a lot of us instead will just think, well, I'm not a very confident person, or I'm really critical of myself. That's my personality or that's the way I am. And so there's a first step which is, what if you just started to think about this as one voice in your head, one like strain of thought within you that you can call the inner critic voice. And that starts to change things already because then it's like, well, what are those other voices in me? And that's just one voice, with the core of me. So that inner critic voice and that's the voice that is saying not very nice things to you. Sometimes they're really obvious and harsh and, who do you think you are, and you're horrible at that and all that. Sometimes they're more subtle like, you know you've never been good at that. You're good at these other things so don't even try that. Or you could do that, but you'd have to go study it for seven years first. Or like, it's fine to be an amateur artist but definitely knowing, people wouldn't wanna buy this. It might sound rational, but if you're hearing a voice that is not grounded in evidence and is not talking to you in a very kind way about the deficits that it's pointing out or looking even for solutions to those, you're probably hearing your inner critic. - Wow. As you're saying that I'm remembering, a few years ago I started to really get into painting and Courtney was showing me a lot of techniques and stuff like that. But just how scary it was to take a picture of what I was painting and post it on Instagram. And you would just sit there and be like, how many likes am I gonna get? And if it was under 10, it was just like a knife to the heart. - Yes. - What does that mean? And probably, it doesn't mean anything. - Right. Well, and social media makes it so much harder. But yeah, we are... So what is inner critic? Why do we have it? Again, a lot of times people think, well, I have this because maybe I had that critical professor or my parents were really tough on me in this way. Or maybe my parents were so adoring that the rest of the world has seemed mean ever since, and that's where the inner critic comes from or whatever. But what I've found over the years is that no matter what our backstory is and no matter what outer critics we have, that's not really what's causing the inner critic. We all have it and the root cause is what you mentioned. It's really about fear, and that we don't like to do things that feel emotionally risky and scary, and creative work is a huge one. Because we might not be good at it, because we're not gonna be the best, because we're, it's like the creative takes you into the unknown and there's trial and error and messy. And it really hurts when our work gets criticized. So our emotional comfort zone seeking self just would rather have us never do anything creative at all. Even though creativity brings us so much joy, right? - Totally. - So that part of you that just always wants to stay in the most stale, comfortable but totally dead zone in your life, that part has to figure out how to keep you from doing things that feel alive and emotionally risky. And the inner critic is the way it does that, if that makes sense. So you can think about, for everyone right now, just think about wherever you hear your inner critic, and maybe it speaks up around a particular part of your creative life or some other part of your life, you can ask yourself, what's the emotional risk, what's the scary emotional thing I'm afraid might happen in those situations? Is it no likes? Is it just, I'm

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gonna hate what I made and that's gonna be excruciating? Is it, I'm gonna try and submit my art to a show and maybe I'll get rejected. What is it, and then your inner critic is just speaking up to try and get you to never encounter that risk. And yet if we listen to it, then we don't get any of the good stuff either. - I know. And that's something that I always think about, is some people maybe don't, maybe they feel they want to share it but they don't need to in order to enjoy it, and that's fine, of course. You don't have to share your work in order to enjoy making it, obviously. But I do think there are people out there who don't share it because of that critic that is speaking up very loudly in their ears. And by the way, if you all are having some realization moments where you're going, oh, I do have an inner critic, feel free to share in the comment section. We wanna hear. I'm gonna be sharing some stories, you I'm sure have some stories, everybody has stories of when their inner critic has held them back, so don't be shy to share. And if you have any questions for Tara, please write in and ask, because she's here to answer them live. - Yeah, we're gonna answer questions, yeah, yeah. And it can also be really fun to share something your inner critic says to you, just to contribute to the conversation because in my courses, we'll do this where everyone will share, what are the things your inner critic says? And I often hear from women, one of my favorite parts of the session was just reading what everyone else's inner critic is saying to them. Because we all think we're alone in our crazy, in our head, and especially as women, we might think, I have these self doubts but everyone else is walking around confidently. And so when you see what's going on for everyone else, it just becomes much more normalizing and you realize like, well, if all these fabulous women are thinking that, and I know it's not true about them, then maybe my inner critic thoughts aren't true about me. - Right. And like you say in your book too, I think it's like speaking it out loud disarms it in a way. - Absolutely, absolutely. We know anytime you put something in writing and for the journal or out there, you know this instinctively, but it also is shown in the research. If you put something in writing, it immediately lessens the intensity of a feeling, which is so powerful. Because you're taking it from the emotional part of the brain into that verbal part. So absolutely, and then once you can observe it and name the inner critic for what it is, oh, I'm hearing my inner critic saying that right now, that makes a huge difference, versus just hearing the thought, identifying with it, taking it as true. So you don't actually, the kind of good news is you don't have to make your inner critic go away. And what we're not saying today is everyone should feel confident and easy breezy when they're doing the hard things or the new things or the creative things in their life. The inner critic will be there but what you wanna do is know, oh, that's my inner critic speaking up. If so you're painting it, this is horrible, this is horrible. Oh, this isn't turning out. Okay, I'm hearing my inner critic, I remember what that is. It's not the voice of truth, it's allowed to be here but I'm not gonna take direction from it. - Totally. And just before I have a question for you about that specifically. - Yes. - But just as one more incentive for leaving comments, we're gonna actually be giving away three copies of "Playing Big" to viewers today. So if you leave us a comment and you like our page and share this post and you will be automatically entered to win this contest and we will mail you a copy of this book, so you can devour the entire thing. So there you go. So what I was gonna ask you, and I'm sure a lot of people at home are wondering too, is how do you tell the difference between this harsh mean irrational inner critic, and the rational critic that is maybe like, you know how to do this. Or, maybe you do- - Maybe that jewelry is not ready for prime time. Maybe it's really not. - Maybe everybody's not good right out of the gates. I need to practice a little bit more. - Yeah, it's a really important question. And there's actually in the book, there's a whole chart that's like, here's what realistic thinking sounds like and here's what your inner critic sounds like where you can contrast and compare, so that's there. - I made some ugly artwork and it was a

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blast making it. It was fine and (indistinct) - I know. Yeah, that's me at the... My son and I, my four-year-old and I do a lot of crafting now and so I get exposed to a lot of mediums that I would not have chosen for myself. And I was like, well, yeah, haven't done Play-Doh in a while. - You can't be good at everything. - I'm not too precise at that. Yeah. - Okay. - So a couple things. So one is, so the inner critic versus realistic thinking, they won't, interestingly those two voices in us, they won't necessarily say different things, but the tone of them is really different. So imagine, let's take the paintings. If you're hearing a voice in your head that sounds grounded and clear-eyed and calm, that's like this work doesn't feel like it is where I want it to be yet. And I can see aesthetically, this isn't working. And then right away there follows in a sense that comes out of a sense of Alliance and friendliness to yourself like what can we do to tweak it? Or what do I need here? Do I need some mentorship? Do I need to go back to the drawing board? Do I need, but there's still like I'm staying with what my goal was. Maybe your goal was to enjoy it, so it doesn't matter. But maybe your goal is to get your work to a place that it does get a certain level of recognition or has commercial liability. So then it's like, okay, what do I need next? And so you're still completely staying on your side through the process, and there's nothing about those thoughts that is getting turned into a larger statement about you and your worth as a human being. Okay, the inner critic, right, looking at the same painting is gonna be anxious and repetitive and looping and it's just gonna be like, this is horrible, this is horrible, this is horrible. There's no, okay honey, what can we do to get it where you wanna go? And it'll also make it, it'll personalize what's happening. So there's those distinctions. - And it's through that repetitive thing. - Looping, yeah. - Oh, man. I remember, one time I had this big art show, this great opportunity, a friend who owns a gallery. I think you should do a show here. And I was like, "Oh." Major leap for me to put my artwork up in a gallery and tell the world to come and look at it, and possibly even buy it. And I actually, it's hilarious saying it because in my mind I was like a mess the whole time. I felt so vulnerable. And it's serious because I was selling a lot of artwork but the thing that I kept saying in the back of my head was, yeah, but it's all your friends, and it's all family. They aren't real people. And it's like girlfriend, why are you being so mean to yourself? Why does that even matter? It's your first gallery show. Of course all your friends and family came (indistinct). - Yeah, and that's really common. And it's actually one of the things that's it's even documented in the research that women do this to a much greater extent than men, that if we have a failure or a shortcoming, we do make it personal. If you have a failure or shortcoming, you're not like, well, that was my friend's fault. That one, you take on. But if there's a success, it's I was lucky, or they just didn't notice that I have no idea what I'm doing or it's because blah, blah, blah, and we rationalize it away. - Away. - Yeah, yah. - I know. - And we can have compassion for ourselves with that because I think as girls, we're often socialized to do that to let just like, not really own success in any way. So it comes from the real road. - And I think I'm so strong and confident and all that. And then I catch myself in those situations and go, I'm not always, I'm not always, mm-mm. - And yes, none of us are, because emotional risks, that's a perfect example. That situation was emotionally vulnerable 'cause your work was going on display in a new way. And so your safety instinct didn't like it and it was like, how can we distract ourselves from what's happening or shut this down, make sure we don't do it again with these thoughts, with these narratives. - Yeah, I know. But one thing that you say in the book that I love is how when your inner critic starts getting really loud and really shrill and hysterical, is usually when you know you're onto something good. - Yes, yes. I'm glad you made that point. 'Cause a lot of times, people get confused like, well, if it's my passion, aren't I supposed to feel really good when I'm doing it. If this is the right career direction for me, wouldn't I feel comfortable in my first week at this new job or whatever that may be. - Or like

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making art, shouldn't that just be a completely blissed out perfect experience from beginning to end. - No. Right, right. 'Cause I'm doing it for stress relief to begin with, so why putting myself through all this stuff. (indistinct) Yeah, I think we're just, we're really vulnerable around our creativity, and I speak for... I'm not a huge visual crafter but I grew up doing dance, every week from age four 'til 20 something, doing theater throughout my life and loving creative writing and poetry. And the older I got, the more an inner critic interfered with those things. Because once it became about, well, how good are you and are you getting into this level of thing and did your poem win that contest? And the grades and all of that, and you start, it becomes about the judgments of the work and the world's reception to the work. And so, I really lost all of my creativity for a long time then once I went to college, it went completely out the door, really, because those environments were so competitive and so critical that I just couldn't quite keep creating in them. And I often say I had a seven-year sabbatical from writing sponsored by my inner critic. Through graduate school and after, and then just the pain of that, which I'm sure is true for a lot of Creativebug folks too. It's like you eventually can't ignore the pain of having your creativity so smashed and locked away, and has to find some way to come out. And maybe you start with something really safe, and just color in the lines in a coloring book or whatever. For me it was like, yeah, just to start to write again before anyone could see it. And then it was so hard to publish the first blog post. And my inner critic was saying, there's no way this is good and people are gonna think this is sappy. And I had the internalized college professors being like this is naive and sentimental and all of that. And so one thing I had to really shift was just completely taking back, I am doing this for myself. The only reason to publish this blog post is 'cause I like the process of writing. And if people get it and they like it, fine. I sometimes use the metaphor of, praise. I allow it to be a cherry on top of the Sunday but it cannot be the Sunday. - Oh, I like that. - Like, it's sweet. Okay, that was a nice little thing that some people like the book. It's a nice little thing that people share this blog post. But if that's what I'm looking for through writing it, I'm never gonna be able to keep creating or writing. Too much of a rollercoaster, and also you don't produce good work when you're doing it for that reason. - Yeah, yeah. So maybe looking at if an Instagram post gets a ton of like, it's like, well that's fun. Or if it doesn't, it's like, well, I liked it. - Yeah, exactly. And also you can- - (indistinct) go you but- - Well, and one of the things we talk about in the book is feedback tells you about the people giving the feedback. It doesn't tell you about you. So if your Instagram post gets a lot of likes, that doesn't tell you that you did better work, it tells you something about what that audience likes. And I think that's a much more neutral way to look at it. It's not personal at all. It's really not. - Totally. And I have to say, I heard Faith gas for a moment earlier or something, Faith is our moderator today. - A shocking question. - So I just wanted to for a minute, in case there was a question or a comment or anything you wanted to share, or maybe a personal comment. - [Faith] We have some comments. One was in response to Liana saying that she didn't think that her work was very good even though her friends bought it. - Is it my mom? - The friend is like (indistinct). - (indistinct) says that work was all amazing. I love the piece, I bought it even made the cut in the new house. - Oh. - Oh, that's nice. - [Faith] Do you believe her? - I do. I'm gonna go to her house and find out. - [Faith] And Lisa Waltzmiller says, "My inner critic isn't very good at taking compliments. Something can be 99% perfect and I always see the 1%. How do we defeat that?" - Well, I think naming it and having awareness of it is the first step. 'Cause once you know that, it's hard to go back to doing it as unconsciously. And then number two, I would ask like, so what's important to you about not continuing that and get connected to the reason for wanting to be able to take in a compliment. And then just know if there's a little voice just speaking up saying something otherwise, you just go,

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okay, I'm hearing my inner critic. That's not the voice of truth. I just got some feedback. And also, letting compliments tell you about the person giving them, rather than about you, it's an interesting thing but that can also allow you to take them in. So if I'm like this person said they loved my art. If that feels hard to take in, because we're making it like, that means my art is good, which is, that gets into really messy territory, I wouldn't go there. It just means it meant something to that person and that was a true fact that they told us about them. It's about them, and it's a nice, sweet thing that happened. - I'm definitely a one, two puncher, when it comes to taking in compliments. And what I love to tell people, like family will give me a compliment and then I'll be like, if somebody says like, your hair looks good, I often will say, oh, I washed it today. That joke is like, I don't usually wash my hair. And so, cutting myself down a little bit. And then as soon as I say it, I go Liana, you're so stupid. Why do you always make a joke when they're trying to give you compliment? - Right, that's the one to- - Why do you (indistinct). So now I'm like doing this, I'm not accepting the compliment now I'm beating myself up for not taking the compliment and it's just spiraling down the toilet. (both laugh) - Right, we talk about the inner critic, how sometimes the inner critic will shame you for having the inner critic thought. I think that's the one, two punch. - You know it. - Yeah, it's what I'm talking about, yeah. - You know better, and so- - Yeah, and it's interesting with the compliment thing because it's probably not that important in our lives that we can take in the random compliment here or there. But I think what is important is, where did we get the messages, women, that if we just go, yeah, thank you. You know, that somehow connects us less to the person who gave the compliment. Than if we say, oh, I got this for $1 at the street when I was (indistinct) - I know (indistinct). (indistinct) on film. - Because there's something where we've learned connection, I'm more connected to you if I say this self-deprecating thing, than if I just say thank you. And I think that's more what's the big picture of what's important to look at there is like, how did we get there as women and what does it mean that we're there? - Yeah, it's true. It's like it makes it a more shared experience in this weird way, but it's probably not good for (indistinct). Maybe in bigger picture. Oh, that's so funny. Well, another thing that we were talking about earlier and I wanted to make sure we touched base on is, separating the inner critic from yourself and one technique that you use for doing that is giving it a character. - Yes. - Which I was struggling with. I still am a little- - Yeah, okay, so we can walk everyone through it. So you can start to think about, what does your inner critic say to you? And if you've got a pen, you can write a few things down. Or if you wanna type them in the comments, a few things that your inner critic says to you, and whatever area of your life it speaks up. And then you can just start to imagine, like okay, so if you were to hear that voice in your head, what does it sound? Does it sound like a male voice or a female voice? We can do this right now? - It's definitely a lady. - Okay, and does it sound like an older or younger? - Maybe a little more like a teenager. - Okay yeah, like a teenager. Yeah, what kind of teenager? - kind of Bratty. - Bratty teenager. - Just looks a little bit. - Yeah, so if you were to build that a little further, just build her out as a character based on the kinds of things she says or how she sounds in your head. Tell us about that teenager. - Ooh, well she's definitely a little more put together than I am. - Yeah, yeah, she does not have frizzy hair or any of those things. Definitely, I think she's like the cool girl, maybe in high school. - Great, and what's her name? Let's go with your gut. - Brooke. - Brooke, there it is. - Her name is Brooke. Brooke was telling me that, but only your family and friends bought your artwork. - Right, right, yeah. What are some of Brooke's other favorite lines? - Oh, let's see. There's another line about you don't have time, or that sounds hard. It sounds hard (indistinct). - It sounds hard and we're not cut out for hard things. - I can't even tell you how many times over the years people have said to me in the most loving, supportive way, "You should really put your

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paintings on fabric. It's a great idea, absolutely, I'm sure it would look wonderful." And every time they say this to me, I say, "Yeah, it's really hard." And I don't even know that it is. This is not based on fact, this is based on a few people who have tried it and said, it's pretty challenging. I know it involves Photoshop and a scanner. - Right, and is that inner critic or is that- - It will a little bit of, we have a class on Creativebug that tells you how to do this. - You might fail to access that. - And I am the editor in chief of Creativebug. Now I'm running out of excuses. But I will tell anybody who asks me, (indistinct) - Is that inner critic or is that just, I don't wanna do that. It doesn't resonate for me. Do you wanna put your paintings on fabric? - I totally do. - Okay. But what's scary about it? - I love it there. I think it's like this, I'm learning new things, the technology barrier. - Technology, okay. - Which I know you've mentioned for that, especially if you didn't grow up with technology confidence, I still struggle with (indistinct). - And that's something that I do too. - I'm not great. - I do too. You shouldn't see my phone ever. It's really bad. But that's something that a lot of people think, well, I'm personally not good with technology or. We know from the research that as a whole women much more often will feel like I'm just not good at technology, money stuff, quantitative stuff, negotiation and it's not true. The research also shows us it's not true, but of course we're conditioned in our culture to just as girls end up feeling like, well, that's not the kind of thing I'm good at, and we think it's personal, it's not. So yeah, so there's some inner critic narratives in there. So you've got your character, you've got Brooke. - I know. And I think Brooke is a little bit of a lazy teenager too. - Yeah, she's not up for the struggle. - And she likes to doll out the insults, but not doing anything for herself. That's Brooke. - And what's Brooke's greatest fear that's motivating all these comments. - That I'm gonna have to think about. You've given me a lot to think about here. - Yeah, so for everyone, so you just think about what is the inner critic voice sound like in on your head, male or female voice, young or old, give it a name, go with your gut instinct for the name. And if you really have trouble thinking of a character, you can also draw from film or literature or whatever. - But I can't wait 'til my next inner critic moment comes up and it can be like, oh Brooke. - Exactly, so that's- - I hear you girl, but she gotta adjust. - And the value in doing this is exactly that. Once you have a character, one, it adds some humor, 'cause you can start to see the ridiculousness of your inner critic, brings them down to size. It also makes it really clear that that's not the heart of you. That's this invasion into your thinking. It's not the core of you in your thinking. - Totally. Now one other thing that I just kept thinking about our Creativebug audience, I know that we have a lot of women. In fact, probably mostly women, but we also do have some dudes, and do dudes not having the critics the same way that women do, do you think, or do you think guys are just as susceptible to some of these voices? - Great question and we also have great- - Gotta think about the dudes. - Great men, readers of the "Playing Big" book and in our course and everything as well. The research is not as clear as you would think on this actually. We know some things like men, a lot of studies show that men tend to overestimate their abilities, women tend to underestimate them. But if you really drill down and look at the specific studies, our self-doubt shows up in different domains. So women tend to feel a lot of self-doubt around leadership, around the things we were just talking about, financial matters or quantitative matters. We tend to think we're not good negotiators, things and where we've gotten a lot of messages that something is a male role. So a lot of things that, leadership in the workplace. Men often feel more self doubt around things like their relationship skills and their communication abilities, their their listening skills, things like that. If studies where you tell men and women like this task requires really great listening skills, go do it, all you have to do is say that and then the men perform worse because they basically go into fight or flight hearing that. - I've been told that they're a great (indistinct) - Yeah. - Shut down. - And so they

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get nervous and they shut down. Yeah, so this self-doubt shows up in different domains. And then there's this other piece about, there's a general sense of misreading our abilities, where women tend to do that in a negative way and men often do that in a more overconfident way. - Okay, wow. - Yeah. - Okay, so we're not alone. - No. - We all have this. That's so fascinating. I love talking about this stuff. Faith, do we have any more questions? - [Faith] Betsy says her biggest challenge as far as her inner critic is looking at other's work and feeling it'll never be that good. - Yeah, so this goes back to, and maybe this will be provocative for people to think about. Is there really such a thing as good work and bad work? I think you could always raise that question, but especially in our time, there's the opportunity to reach so many different kinds of audiences and find your people who are loving what you do and what you're looking at as good, that's maybe not what their taste is for. So I think there's a lot to be said for like... Who do you wanna serve and reach with your work, or what do you wanna experience for yourself through your work? And then, orient your process around that. But one thing for me that was such a revelation was in college doing a lot of poetry writing, I still write poetry, it's very sacred to me, it's like a favorite creative pursuit. And when I was in school, we studied the only kind of poetry that was seen as valid was impossible to understand, totally opaque, super long, extremely cerebral and extremely dark. So I thought that's what legitimate poetry was and that was not the kind I wanted to write. And so it was always really confusing 'cause of course my poetry was never very well received. And then several years out of school, one day I was just browsing on Amazon, and I saw it just somehow it came up on my Amazon homepage. Was here are the top selling poetry books in the U.S., and it was Mary Oliver and Rumi and these poets who wrote very simple, very accessible, very emotional and very inspiring poetry. And none of those poets would have even been considered close to good enough to be taught in my university, and yet they were the best selling poets in the U.S. And so, that just for me was one of many experiences of this breaking down of the concept of good work and bad work. It's like what kind of work do you wanna do and who's the audience for that? And throwing out these seemingly objective terms for things that I don't think can really be judged that way. - Yeah, oh, that's fascinating. And that is one way we can talk ourselves out of what we wanna pursue, is by saying, oh, but that's so different than what I know is respected or appreciated or whatever, or what I'm doing. It looks like nothing else, so, probably people are gonna hate it. - Right, right, right, which is probably actually the key to them loving it. - I know. - That it's different. - Now, one last bit of advice I'm gonna ask from you. What do you suggest when, 'cause a lot of us, I think most of us, have these inner critic moments come up in our lives, and they're were some times decades ago. Or they didn't just happen last week so it doesn't feel like an automatic course correction can happen. But where you went to take a chance, the inner critic stepped in and won. And never took that plunge, you never applied to graduate school, or you never I don't know what dream it was that you wanted to pursue but you didn't do it. And it's always stuck with you. What do you do with that? I think it can feel like dead weight to people. That what if, and even worse knowing, and I stopped myself. - Yeah. It's interesting, because what I find is that sometimes when people learn about the inner critic and they start thinking about that, it can come up for some people, that kind of feeling of like, oh, but now I see the pattern, and this is such a bummer. And now it's- - I wasted so much time. - Yeah, I wasted so much time and now it's too late and it's connected to that. - I'm not gonna make any of the 40 under 40 lists now, or whatever (laughs). - God, (indistinct). But I would say that whole line of thought is actually, it's there as a defense mechanism. Actually, it's the same safety instinct, being like, oh, oh. Now she's onto this and... Because just think about it, if you just completely let the past go and just stepped completely into the present, now we're back in scary territory. Cause now

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you're back in the present, with what in your life now, - Or you can actually (indistinct) - Where you can actually make change now, with the risks you might be taking now and you have more awareness of your inner critic so that you're not even gonna, it's not gonna stop you in the same way. And so that whole thing is actually meant to distract you from that whole narrative of, but what about that thing, and now it's too late and I wasted, is all a way of shifting your away from the scarier place of what is actually now the right step to take now in my life? And so I think we can do the same thing. Like, well, that's a distraction, and I could go down that road. It's a defense mechanism to focus there, but actually there's a lot of choice in front of me now, and God willing, a lot of time left in front of me to live that choice and all of that. - So you can spend a lot of time and energy looking back in the past and regretting choices or thinking, oh, I really should have done that differently. - And it's actually more inner critic, and it's more it's more being run by fear in a way. But on the other hand, you can't ignore it altogether. It's like you have to acknowledge it. Right, and there can also be a healthy, just like, oh, I see this now and I feel it. And I'm gonna journal about it and I'm gonna feel feelings that maybe I didn't feel then, maybe there's a good cry to be heard, maybe there's a couple such top conversations with a friend or a therapist. - Excuse me for a moment. - As long as you're processing the feelings, which is different than ruminating about the wasted time. So if you're processing the feelings, you'll feel yourself moving through it and you'll come out of it, and then you can come back to your choices in the present. And there might be a little grieving to do with compassion. But always knowing, I think that nothing is wasted and things happen right on time and all that good stuff. - Yeah, have faith in the universe, everyone. - Yes. - And unless we have any more questions, I think we've taken up enough of your time. - Thanks to everybody who's watching, thank you. - I feel so lucky that we got to have you here to talk about this - Oh, thank you. - particular topic with this particular audience. And again, everybody, the book is "Playing Big." And if you enjoyed this and want to enter a contest to receive one of three copies of this book, then leave a comment here, like and share this post. And we will see you next time. Thanks again. - Thanks everybody. - All right. - Thanks so much. (upbeat music)

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