

Ali Schultz:

Oh, hi Rachel.

Rachel Ryle:

Hi Ali. How are you?

Ali Schultz:

I'm so good.

Rachel Ryle:

Good. I'm so good too.

Ali Schultz:

Yay. I love this.

Rachel Ryle:

I'm so excited to, um, connect and talk about this.

Ali Schultz:

Yes. I think we should talk about joy today and, um, and creativity and creative habits after you and I had kind of just connected via text over, over and around the holidays, um, you know, it kind of hit me. I was like, I, I feel like Rachel's the person to have a conversation on the podcast about this.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

So, um, here we are.

Rachel Ryle:

And I love it because throughout the holidays I have listened to your podcast as a sense of like a space of, I need to be a better person. So I'll like tune in and get some good pointers. And so, yeah, it's fun that I'm gonna hear my voice on the podcast.

Ali Schultz:

I feel like you need, um, uh, a decent introduction though and I have nothing prepared other than, uh, you know, if I had to introduce you, it would probably be one of the most creative, um, and, and funny people I know.

Rachel Ryle:

Aw, thank you.

Ali Schultz:

But for as long as I've been aware of you, um, just here in kind of the Boulder community, um, you've always been doing something like incredibly creative, um, and, and very witty, and it's, it's my remarkable and, um, such a delight. So maybe say a little bit about what you're doing these days and, and, and how you got into it?

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. Well, thank you for the compliment, first of all. I will try to be funny on this part podcast. Now I have to channel my humor. Um, I, I think that, luckily I have just been like under the like idea that creativity is just always this thing that you pursue and I get it from my parents and I'm so glad I got it from them. Um, this, this confidence that, um, creativity is really kind of this life force that you, you have to flex and you have to strengthen just as much as any other part of your being. And, um, so luckily I think that I just started applying that from a very young age into all forms of social media. So I think you and I first met probably on like the Twitter days, I'm thinking.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah.

Rachel Ryle:

Um, and it started back then when, actually it started in Myspace days, but we won't go back that far (laughs). Um, but, uh, even in like Twitter days, it was kind of trying to use a social media platform and spark some kind of creative conversation or joy. Um, at the time when, um, Twitter first came out, I was wittywit. Um, speaking of the wit that I like to kind of splash into the world. Um, my first like big creative endeavor was that I decided to rhyme all of my tweets for a year and I would at least do one a day. And, um, I think that luckily when you, you know, apply creativity to different platforms in that way, it just kind of, I learned pretty early on with social media that people love, uh, they love a story and they love coming to someone for a source of consistency their voice. And that voice can be through rhyme, it can be through art, it can be through, you know, not always joyful things like people just are used to, you know, following along in someone's journey that has an ongoing vibe.

Rachel Ryle:

Seeing the results of that way back in the days of Twitter I've applied that across everything that I've done since, and it's taken more of, um, an artistic flair where that, um, I really leaned into my drawing abilities and my illustrative and animative, um, whether I taught, like, I, I just went down this journey of how else I could express myself creatively throughout different platforms. And now that's transpired across all the social media sites that I have been creating on.

Ali Schultz:

And we all get to benefit from it.

Rachel Ryle:

Thank you.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah. You know, one of the things that I've been fascinated by, um, with the internet and even social media is, is what can you create with this? Like, how can you use this medium, um, and do something kind of fun and creative or useful. Um, and you know, I think about that even with, you know, kind of like reboot in, in our m- marketing stuff, I hold marketing loosely. It's more, you know, what are our content offerings, but, um, I share a similar, um, kind of ethos, I guess, you know?

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

But how can we really bring something, you know, alive and authentic and delightful and-

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

... um, something that when you encounter it, it just creates a spark for the receiver.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

I mean, making someone laugh, um, that's like the ultimate form of connection, I think.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. And like making a lot of the times too, if it provokes any kind of thought in them where it takes them to any parts of their brain, I just love the idea that the time and effort and, you know, thought that we put into what we put out inevitably is, has the potential of like doing the opposite for someone like reaching in and sparking their thoughts and, um, sparking their joys and sparking their heartbreaks and sparking whatever it sparks in them. But I love the idea that social media can be not just a, Hi, I'm beautiful and I have an Evian bottle, and this is how I drink it. Um, (laughs) like, it can be very like thought provoking and deep and meaningful.

Rachel Ryle:

And, um, yeah, I think that that's kind of how I've approached, um, social media, which in turn has just kind of been pretty much like, I, I apply that across the board in my life and, you know, how can I be thoughtful and what are the things that I can do to bring meaning to my day and to somebody else's day. Um, and yeah, and I'm happy that I found a way to do that through, you know, the different platforms that are out there today and in daily life.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) Um, and what, what has your attention these days?

Rachel Ryle:

I think last year was just, you know, this hard thing for people to get through and with all that, um, I really was impacted mentally, and it's a hard thing as a creative to be in a space of, um, yeah, like in a space of darkness and, and sadness because so much of creativity often comes from like places of healthier thoughts and more, um, joyful, more joyfulness, at least my creativity does. And so I found myself really shutting down, you know, throughout the last year of, um, not finding that and that energy that I need to create with.

Rachel Ryle:

And so, um, happily, I have really done a great job refocusing my brain, refocusing my health, refocusing my efforts, and creating just a healthier, um, daily lifestyle that really ultimately supports my creativity to thrive. Um, so yeah, when, when asked, you know, what it is I'm focusing on, I just feel like I'm doing a really good job focusing on like the, the here and now and, um, allowing that to, you know, cultivate a healthier being that can, I don't know, just build better and bigger things in the future, or even start building now, but that's what I'm focusing on now is, um, self-care, but it's actually starting to, like, I don't know, when you start to see the results of self c-... self-care, it, it's really impressive how much your life changes and how much your, um, your views of life change.

Ali Schultz:

As I was listening to you, um, I feel like what you were doing is really putting your attention back on you.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. Yeah. I feel that too. And, and you know, so much of that, isn't just, it's not something that you get to in a daily, like one day. You can't be like, okay, I'm gonna focus on me or creatively, I'm gonna focus on me. It genuinely is a assess the life that you're living and turn all directions back to a, back to a place of health for you, like choosing you across the board. And it's a lot when you kind of view your life in the, all the different pockets that you have to speak to. But as soon as you recognize what it is that's filling your time and, and how much of that isn't, um, feeding you or, or supporting that idea of like taking care of yourself, um, once you get a handle of what those things are, and then just daily addressing them.

Rachel Ryle:

You know, for me, it was as little as like drinking more water to, um, taking a walk or, um, being thoughtful towards like, um, having a conversation with somebody like a text, a call, whatnot. Like these are things that feed me. And so, um, just kind of a recognizing the, the small things in life that make you feel back to yourself is kind of, you know, seems like a big task because it's really across the board of what you have to attend to, but it's so worth it. When now at the end of the day, I genuinely feel like I've lived each day with purpose and with fulfillment and like, I'm happy with where my attention went and I feel like more fed just in a daily life than drained. And I can't say that I've felt that in probably years, not

even through the pandemic, but before then, I've never had a, a healthy, um, balance of tending to what's important to me.

Ali Schultz:

Hmm. Where, um, where would you find those, uh, like the drains? If you were to kind of imagine like the drains or like if you had a leaky bucket on like-

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

... that attention and energy, where, where were the leaks?

Rachel Ryle:

I feel like in my life just giving energy to, giving my energy to others that that energy really needed to be brought back to me. Like, um, and that's been a big one for me within relationships and with, within navigating, just, you know, surrounding myself. I was recently told that you are the sum of the five people you hang out with the most.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

And when I kind of assessed what that meant in my life, um, it was during like, you know, the holidays that I really was just visually thinking about that. There's five people that hold me up and if I'm the star on the top of a Christmas tree, that top fringe of the tree, that's five people strong. Needs to be pretty awesome and pretty strong and pretty like supportive to be able to hold on to the star that I am on top. Like they need to support my brightness and my shininess and, you know, go with whatever movement I'm about to like shake up in the world.

Rachel Ryle:

And so there's people that, um, I think finding, finding the right relationships to like put your energy toward, um, at least in my book, has been really helpful. Energy is a very valuable thing and, and when you give it out and your flame isn't being lit brighter and it's being snuffed at all, or it's being blown on (laughs), there's only so much your little flame can handle before you need people around you that are going to see that brightness and ignite it even brighter and push it to be like more fierce and more, you know, just brilliant.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

And you know, like within the idea of self-care, I love myself a good martini, but my creativity suffers and my productivity suffers every time I lean into vices like alcohol and, um, even like going out for like big dinners, it's kind of, it impact my entire, you know, like afternoon of getting ready and then I'm out and about, and then I'm tired until 2:00 PM and, and it just, my time is becoming much more valuable to really be focused on the things that bring me joy as opposed to anything that distances me from, um, being productive and feeling purposeful and feeling my power. Like-

Ali Schultz:

Yeah.

Rachel Ryle:

So that's, those are, those have been the big things for me, is, um, within mental health and then so surrounding myself with the people and the voices that really pushed me to grow and, and highlight my, like, like you did in the beginning of this call, like the reason that you and I are good friends is every time we talk, I think that we encourage each other's power and we, we challenge each other to grow. Like as long as I've known you, you've challenged me to grow. So like, those are the people that I think you need in your life to get, um, yeah, to be your best self.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah. As you were talking, I was, especially as you were talking about like the habits, right?

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

And like where your energy goes and how, um, you know, how all those parts of your day would affect your, your art or your creativity the next day.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Whether it was big dinners or, um, some enjoyable beverages at a bar, at a cool bar-

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

... you know, in the evening. Um, and it reminded me of a few artists that I track kind of, um, just kind of in the, in the social verse, I guess. But a lot of them kind of adhere to this practice of creating their work having abstained from alcohol for, you know, like over, over 24 hours so that what's coming out of them is, is more true and more pure.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Um, you know, it's, it's, it's like, they are about as clear as they can be when they're sitting down to this creative work.

Rachel Ryle:

Absolutely.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah.

Rachel Ryle:

And, and like, I still, I think that there's, um, there's charm, I still go on dates with like my creativity and, uh, I still get dressed up and I'll still go and get a martini and a lot of ideas come out in those moments. My favorite place to draw is a bar, um, like between 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM, where that I'm not going to the bar to talk to anybody. I love it 'cause the people watching is amazing especially in New York.

Ali Schultz:

I think art dates are so great.

Rachel Ryle:

Oh yeah, they really are.

Ali Schultz:

They so are. I mean I have at least two, if not many, many more, too handfuls full of, of what I call fairy art mothers in my life and they are, um-

Rachel Ryle:

Cute.

Ali Schultz:

... women, um, and a few guys who, who have really, uh, supported me at key moments-

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz):

... in my fledgling art career, I will say, right. As I dabble as an artist and whether it's somebody giving me the keys to their studio space and giving me, you know, uh, a three by four canvas to just start something, right?

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

Um, which it sells and then allows me to get like more canvas, et cetera, or, um, you know, another, another friend who ended up being a German tutor and then became, uh, like my art buddy. And we would take ourselves on art dates, whether it was to the art museum down in Denver or to, you know, all the art stores in Denver. Um, or we'd have like crafty art days in her basement. Right? 'Cause she, you know, she had a whole setup down there and, and she'd invite me in and, and kind of gave me the space and the supplies-

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

... and, and it fuels. Um, it's so, so much of a sense of possibility and also, um, confidence and, and, you know, just having that space to dive in and be curious-

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

... and explore these, these expressive impulses that you have. Those art dates I think are so, so key.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah, they are. It's a really... it's a powerful thing. And my dad told me that, um, you know, in kindergarten, kids are asked, who in here is an artist? And everyone will like eagerly raise their hand. Like me, me, me, me, me, me, me. And by first grade, the same question will be asked and less than half the class will confidently say I'm an artist. I have found the very common way of creativity being artistically, you know, like through illustration and through animation.

Rachel Ryle:

Um, but there's creativity in so many things. And, um, when people can confidently be supported in that and, um, know that they are good, regardless of their level of, you know, ability, it can only foster better mental health, because you're able to express yourself without... Like creativity is the, you know, the flexing of the muscle of the brain and the heart. And when that gets like shunned or shut down or not allowed to be expressed, like no wonder there's a lot of mental health problems. Um, I feel like at least in my journey, whenever I'm in a downtime, whenever I'm kind of like struggling, when I revert back to



myself, it ultimately, it ultimately lands on a place of creativity and what can I create? Because every time I take my time and put it into creating something-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

When I'm done with it, it's the ultimate feeling of like purpose.

Ali Schultz:

It's like a reclaiming of our of our power.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Um, at a really, really, um, kind of potent level, because we're able to say this is my creative agency, and, and in this case it's quite literal, right?

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Like here I am, like, I might feel completely down in the dumps or, you know, twisted, you know, in all different directions from some crazy relationships or, or life situations or whatever. Um, but, you know, the ability to find your way back to yourself and to do something then from that place or express from that place. I mean, for some artists, it's a movement, for some it's, it's voice, for, for the, for the authors and writers, it's the written word. Right?

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz :

And then there are the, what I think are the really talented folks who can draw things.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. (laughs)

Ali Schultz:

Um, you know, but whatever that is, it's, um, there's a coming home piece to it.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

You know, you're coming home to yourself and also, um, such a deep form of connection, like you said, to who you are and, and what's true for you even in that moment.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

Like there's no pretense, there's no posturing, there's no, I'm gonna make this for something else. Like, I'm just making this thing.

Rachel Ryle:

I'm just making it. And that's like, the beauty of being human beings is we are the one species that has, have these innate weird curiosities and ideas that just come to us. Like they come to me, they come to you. And in that ability to have passions and have curiosities and have wonder of how could I make that? Um, gosh, like it's such a gift to be able to, to listen to that and use that and make something from those little feelings we were born to create, that's, that's what we do as humans. We create businesses, we create families, we create art, we create railroad systems. Um, and yeah, like sharpening that muscle and giving it, giving it the fun play that the rest of our body like gets to have fun (laughs) in different ways.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

Um, so not to be intimidated by it, but just to like thrive and it is such a beautiful tool to tap into. You know, there's so many things that I could say yes, like I'm an animator and I'm an illustrator and I'm a storyteller, but sometimes those muscles aren't on, like sometimes they're drained or they're blocked or just like clouded.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah.

Rachel Ryle:

... and so recognizing the other things that kind of spark joy in the same way of that purpose, um, and continually recognizing those things and putting efforts towards them, ultimately you're doing, you're doing that side of the storyteller animator, illustrator artist side, a huge favor because you're actively keeping it going, but letting them rest for like the beauty that they are, um, while keeping up your curiosity and your strength of your creativity as a whole.

Ali Schultz:

Before we kind of, kind of dive into, like, what are the practices that you have actively done to kind of, um, support you and keep your, you know, attention in the right place and to fuel kind of that creative hearth, we'll say.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Before we head there, I, there are, there are a few things, like I just was remembering, um, the bootcamp and you came to one of our bootcamps.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

It was our second bootcamp. You were our illustrator.

Rachel Ryle:

I loved it.

Ali Schultz:

So Rachel was there, and she was kind of in the group, but kind of hanging out on the sidelines. And she came out with like a series of images that was basically an illustration of the weekend. Um, and I still have them somewhere in there, adorable and kind of funny. Um, of course.

Rachel Ryle:

I love it. (laughs)

Ali Schultz:

But it was so great having you there. And that was one of the first camps that, uh, we tried something new and we haven't really done it since, but, um, I schlepped all these boxes of magazines up to, well, where we were in Winter Park at Devil's Thumb Ranch. And, um, we had one afternoon, it was kind of like a little get in touch with the magic and have a little creative exercise afternoon.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

We had like 15, um, participants, like on the floor with their tongues sticking out-

Rachel Ryle:

I loved it.

Ali Schultz:

... creative focus, um, making vision boards or, or collages about-

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

... you know, what they loved about their life and what they knew to be true and, and things that they were like longing or hoping for. And, um, I just remember like looking at you from across the room and you're like whole face was just lit up. (laughs)

Rachel Ryle:

It's like, I'm smiling ear-to-ear right now too, 'cause it's, that was such a amazing, like one opportunity to be able to go to the retreat and also to be asked, to be asked to be present in a way of artistically looking and hearing and taking it all in, but then also, um, to be like, it was a gift, part of it, and to see the magic of the transformation that happens with people at Reboot is insane to me. Like I still think about it, forever, I'll think about it. And in that afternoon it just felt like I was home. I was in that kindergarten class where like everyone says, they're an artist, get on the floor and like figure out what you want to make.

Ali Schultz:

It was so cool to see everyone just lean right in.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

And it's such a rare space, like life gets so full and so busy and so stressful and so ugh that, um, you know, it's, it's really easy to write off that, uh, form of practice or that outlet, um, or those hobbies or whatever, um, fuel us in, in kind of parallel and direct ways, you know?

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

Toward, depending on whatever we do in our, you know, day jobs.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

How can we carve out more space for this?

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

You mentioned something early on kind of in our conversation today, about how when life kind of starts feeling like, um, or the world kind of feels like a dumpster fire, um, or, or you kind of lose a sense of who you are due to either whatever lack of boundaries or, uh, really shit relationships, or just finding yourself in a job where you're like, oh, how did I get here? (laughs)

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

Like, oh man, what is this? And you kind of need to, you know, come back to find yourself. There is, um, there is this poem by David Whyte, um, it's called the *Sweet Darkness*. And, um, you know, there are some lines that I think are, are kind of key and it's, um, give up all the other worlds except the one to which you belong.

Rachel Ryle:

I love that.

Ali Schultz:

Sometimes it takes darkness and the sweet confinement of your aloneness to learn anything or anyone that does not bring you alive is too small for you.

Rachel Ryle:

I love it.

Rachel Ryle:

It's so true. And that's like, it speaks so much to like the energy that you put out and how powerful it is when your energy actually goes back to self-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

... because it's not selfish at all.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah.

Rachel Ryle:

Like I have felt, I have felt like in the last couple months, you know, I haven't had the energy to give as much as I was giving to other people in my life, but ultimately my reach for other people to fill the void that I was trying to fill, wasn't their place to fill in the first place and like recognizing that and really realizing that you're alone, being alone does not mean you're lonely. Like there's a lot of power in, in, in solitude of the sense of getting in, in touch and getting, you know, reconnected with what's important to you and what feeds you.

Ali Schultz:

I know you have, um, a few practices that you do, um, religiously, I'll say-

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

... um, that that really kind of keep you, you know, focused on, you know, what's true and right for you.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Um, and thinking of, you know, your gratitude practice and, um, and then we were connecting over the holidays about the joy full list.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Let's dive into those and like other ways and all the ways that you kind of tend to your creativity.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. The gratitude, um, list like that was the first, um, it was definitely the first thing that I put into practice after a bad breakup. And I just, uh, honestly, like my journal at the time was becoming angrier and angrier 'cause I was told somewhere on some Oprah Show, like you have to write things out to like appeal. And, um, so yeah, I would write down my thoughts of this heartbreak that I was going through, but then the pages became more and more like a crazy ransom note of like anger. Like my, my text was, you know, just chicken scratch, like just so angry. And, um, what happened was, is I was moving to New York and I was packing up my apartment and I found that journal, and I was reading through it and I was like, oh my gosh, like goodness girl.

Rachel Ryle:

Like, like I was clearly just like angry, but as I was reading the pages, um, the, like the words became angrier and angrier and I could hardly read my own hair in writing. It was that aggressive and that dark. Um, and I flipped the page to see the next, you know, part of the drama, and the next page I had written,

um, very clearly, very pretty, very simple in the middle of the page, I just said, I think it's time for me to start a different kind of journal. Period. And that was like mid-journal, like halfway through that journal, I just ended it and said enough. And then I was like, whoa, I'm like, I'm like, oh, that's right. That's when I started my gratitude journal. So I found my other, my happy journal and that's what it's called.

Rachel Ryle:

In the front, I just wrote like, this is my happy journal. And I started, um, writing down things that I was thankful for every day, like things that were happening in my life, three things different every single day. And you know, it's a practice that many people do, but what's beautiful about it and, um, what's powerful in it for me is that, you know, I started that journal and [inaudible 00:44:27] seriously 13 days after I started that journal, I had been daily documenting, these are the things I'm thankful for.

Rachel Ryle:

And 13 days into it, um, I wrote down like, thank you... I'm thankful that I posted a piece of art on Instagram and all my friends liked it. And the next day, I'm thankful that, um, all, like all these new people are, you know, seeing, like are contact me on social media or like following me on social media and reaching out. And like the next day was like, oh my gosh, I'm thankful that my art, my piece of art has over a thousand likes. And so basically in the time that I, um, started pursuing art as a career and basically the animations and the art that I was making on Instagram kind of like sparked and they went viral, I had been recently starting to document my gratitude. And luckily, looking back, I now have day by day, everything that happened through gratitude of the explosion of, you know, within seven weeks from that first piece of art that I posted just for fun on Instagram, um, I quit my day job and I opened my animation studio and all of that is documented in this practice of giving thanks for what's present and what's ahead of, like what's in front of you.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

And I really do attribute my change apart and my change of [inaudible 00:46:24] in this, like, stop focusing on... So much of me, like focuses on the past often-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

... and tries to fix it or tries to understand it, but, and like looks too much to the future of like, what's gonna happen and how do I get there? But really being present in this moment and giving thanks. And, um, I don't know, like there's so much power in that.

Rachel Ryle:

That has been an ongoing practice of mine. And, um, and then recently when we, you and I were talking over the holidays, um, I, December was like a really hard month with, um, different, you know, um, yeah, different hardships in life. And it was just kind of the end of this year, this hard year-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

... and I, December 31st, was just like, I can't, I can't do the next year like I did this year. Like I need a different emo. I need it to feel different. Um, and so on December 31st, I just, instead of making a New Year's resolution list, I just wrote on a piece of paper at the very top, um, be joyful, like full of joy, be joyful. And under it, I'm like, I just wrote, do the things that bring you joy.

So there's like 20 different things on this list that, um, yeah, I made December 31st and like starting January 1st, I, I have it on my art table and now I reference it every day as though it's a to-do list of like, what should I do on this list today? When I, you know, mindfully address this list and I do something on it, um, what I have found now, you know, a month later, that every single one of my days feels like I've lived with so much more purpose, even if it's the small things on my list of writing a friend or being thoughtful to a stranger or, um, recognizing... I think by recognizing what brings me joy and then purposely doing what brings me joy big or small, um, the satisfaction and the power behind going to bed at night, feeling like I accomplished what I, my soul needed-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

... (laughs) is like such a powerful, like, it's, it's insanely powerful as much as the gratitude because you're living in a day that feels purposeful and it feels that you had intent. Honestly the good thing for me is that like, what brings us joy? Like what brings me joy and what brings you joy? There are so many small things in our lives that tick that box, that they can be a part of this list and a part of this practice that like, if anything, you are just mentally checking in with your joy pockets of your brain, like-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

... and, and addressing them.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah. Mary Oliver has this line in her poem, I think it's from *Wild Geese*. So you, you only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.

Rachel Ryle:

I love that.

Ali Schultz:

And I think that speaks to kind of this, um, this very kind of base thing about what brings us joy, right?



Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

And how we know what we know about what brings us joy. Like it's a visceral kind of feeling.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

Um, and, and everybody kind of has their own like joy barometer, 'cause we're all these unique bubbles of experience running around in the world. And we're all like driven or fueled in a certain way by, by something different, like the world tickles us differently.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

And by following those impulses, um, and those delights and whatever trail that leads you down, I, I feel so strongly that that is the... there's so much magic in that.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

When we make space for it or, um, you know, orient our lives around it in a way where, you know, it's, it's front and center.

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz :

And if, and if it takes an artfully creative list, even I've seen yours next to our computer to remind ourselves like, no, you can choose this. You can go back to that place. Um, and to know that it fuels us in a different way. I think that's so important.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. And like, truthfully, my... I've been pretty disconnected from my, um, the joy of my art for a hot pocket, hot pocket.

Rachel Ryle :

(laughs) Sorry. Um, but I have, I've felt disconnected from the joy of creating my typical creations that, um, in, like I was saying earlier, in still recognizing what brings me joy and tending to those mus-... like tending to those passions and curiosities, like, um, I know, and I feel, and I can see that my, my creativity as far as my day job is being so, is being rejuvenated. It's being... It's bursting with energy to create. So now that I've created these healthy habits of little things that I enjoy doing, it in turn has just heightened the curiosity and excitement to get back into a world of creating, um, my pieces of art that I do. And I, um, yeah, like I'm gleaming from... Like my smile is so big lately because I feel like I'm making with such passion and with, with such purpose.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

And it's only being supported by A, you know, a whole picture of self-care (laughs) of like all the things that I'm doing to support that creativity. Um, it's all working together to make sense as to, as to why it got suffocated a little bit.

Ali Schultz:

Yeah. In many ways you're able to bring like your full self to something.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

'Cause you're fed.

Rachel Ryle:

... I'm calling this, um, Get Fed-uary.

Ali Schultz:

I see so many, um, entrepreneurs, clients, et cetera, like they, they kind of arrive kind of at the, sometimes at the doorstep of reboot, like, man, I'm like wiped out and I need to like get back to myself or realign with something or, or find some spark back, um, along with, you know, how do I do X, Y, and Z, but there's always this, this deeply personal which is, um, you know, how, how is my aliveness? Um, you know, is what I'm doing bringing me alive?

Alison Schultz:

I have, um, kind of a dear friend from, my not, not too distant past life, um, who, who was kind of down, down in the dumps for a while. And, and I said to her, I was like, "Wha- what do you love? You know, what, what is on that love list?" Um, and she was like, "Well, I don't know, but there's at least three things, wine, cheese, and bikes."

Rachel:

(laughs)

Alison:

And I was like, "You know what, it's start."

Rachel:

Yeah.

Ali:

And, and it was, it was very true for her at that moment. And, um, and I think the beauty of, you know, the joyful list or the love list, which is something that, um, you know, I'll, I'll have clients sometimes turn to, is just to reconnect with what are these things in your life that you love? And that you get fed by. it's one of those things that it's like a working document. It, it, it can be added to and refined and, um, you know, you might discover new things like, oh man, skydiving, that's it. I gotta add that to the list.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. And like in a day and age of subscribing to, you know, following, following people and subscribing to things like this is just basically subscribing to your inner joy of like, what do I... when I open up my feed of what feeds me, what do I want to see? And how much did I engage with it this year?

Ali Schultz:

It's amazing how it takes, sometimes it can take... we can get so outside of ourselves. Um, but to then, like, resubscribe to ourselves or recommit to ourselves.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

It's such an essential move.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. And you change, like we change. Things, things grow. And so, you know, I don't think I have checked in with myself. Uh (laughs) for like, at least I don't even know, like a long time of genuinely a practice of like, okay, what am I about? And what do I really want and how am I really gonna make this happen?

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

And that story changes, like you said, I may like skydiving. I highly doubt it, but I might like it next year. And so to actively have a practice, I can imagine that if I keep this up, like God, like the, the joy of living-

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

... is that much more readily, like present and available and obvious of living a day by day, living a day that you feel served purpose of any kind.

Ali Schultz:

Just yesterday, um, in a client session, uh, uh, they had, uh, either going out for some time off, um, with their main squeeze in life and, um, you know, one of the guiding kind of inquiries into, you know, what, what would you like this time to be, you know, this, this vacation time? He's like, "Joy, like more joy."

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah.

Ali Schultz:

Um, and Maya Angelo said, uh, we need joy as we need air.

Rachel Ryle:

Yeah. It's so true. Just taking the time to recognize what are the joyful things in my life? Um, yeah, like starting there is powerful in itself to speak truth into, you know, ultimately what will feed you back. Um, 'cause joy is powerful like that, like, it is a, it's a powerful feeding force of your soul.

Rachel Ryle:

And really, like for me, [inaudible] speaking to it and nurturing it and identifying it and, um, doing all the things that, um, you know, that cultivate a daily practice just around joy, ultimately, like I already said it, has completely supported me in my creativity on the other side that I was drained in. Like I was, I wasn't finding the life force behind waking up and wanting to create. So instead I had just started focusing on anything that made me happy, and in turn all the attention within a month's time, if not, within two weeks, I realized that, you know, there's still so much joy and passion behind my art obviously, but it just needed to be supported across the board of my heart and my time and my efforts and my being fed.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

So it's really exciting. It's kind of like, it's pretty impressive in my heart that I feel I do from a month ago.

Ali Schultz:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Rachel Ryle:

So I can testify to that, that it's worth attempting. And if, if in my month, in two weeks that I had seen a result of kind of the joy in my life being really amplified, I can only like imagine what the future is gonna hold if I keep this up, which I will.

Ali Schultz:

I look forward to hearing about it. I'm so glad that we did this. And, you know, really circling around these questions that you posed, you know, what are the things that bring you joy? What do you love to create and what daily life do you wanna create?

Rachel Ryle:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Ali Schultz:

They're such important questions. I think they're just as important as, as you know, feeling into all of the other emotions that come up in this human experience.

Rachel Ryle:

Absolutely. Yeah. And I'm thankful to have the friendship with you and the ability to, you know, join in on the podcast and talk about it. And I really hope that people out there, whoever it is, kind of get sparked to try this as well, 'cause only good can come from joy.

Ali Schultz:

It's been a joy.

Rachel Ryle:

Aw, cute. It's been a joy, Ali. Thank you very much.