

Julie Bjelland (00:02.03)

Welcome to the HSP and NeuroDivergent podcast. I'm Julie Bieland, founder of Sensitive Empowerment and a psychotherapist specializing in high sensitivity and late diagnosed autism in women. Today, I'm excited to share an episode that will resonate deeply with our creative and sensitive listeners. We're joined by Eli Trier, a talented neurodivergent artist who's both autistic and has ADHD whose authenticity and knowledge are both inspiring and relatable. Eli shares invaluable insights on navigating the challenges of a traditional nine to five job and prioritizes wellness while pursuing a passion for art. I really love how Eli shared that the self-awareness really changed following her autism diagnosis.

And instead of seeing herself as a struggling neurotypical person, she saw herself as she truly was, a neurodivergent person doing exceptionally well. And I think that's just such a beautiful thing. In this episode, Eli discusses the importance of self-care and finding success on your own terms outside of conventional marketing strategies that just might not feel great to how we like to do things.

She really emphasizes the power of authenticity, showcasing how simply being yourself and sharing your art can attract like-minded individuals into your world. She's so authentic and there are so many incredible pieces of wisdom and gems in this episode. I highly recommend it. Our conversation is hosted by Andrea Weber, founder of Expansive Happiness and an amazing host.

in our Heart-Centered Business Group. And we really invite you to join our Heart-Centered Business Group, where you're going to find a very supportive environment. You're not alone. You can get feedback, ideas, gain referrals, and attend unique events like this one, learning from guest speakers who really understand our needs. And, you know, we have a different path and a different way of doing things, and it's powerful to...

Julie Bjelland (02:28.875)

really talk about those things and be together, surrounded by other people who are neurodivergent and sensitive. And I think Eli's journey is really a fantastic example of what it means to live and work in a neurodivergent, friendly way. You know, this is about supporting our needs and her approach to self-care and business, it's just packed with so much wisdom and immensely practical at the same time.

And I want to thank you for tuning in. And remember, you're not alone. We hope that this episode inspires you as much as it inspired us. And you can check out the show notes for more information about everything that's been talked about on this episode. And I turn it over to Andrea now. Enjoy.

Andrea Weber (00:02.286)

Hello and welcome everyone. Thank you so much for joining our event, Growing a Business to Support Our Creativity. My name is Andrea Webber and today we're recording live from the

Sensitive Empowerment Community, which offers a positive alternative to social media for sensitive people. And you can find us at [sensitivecommunity .com](http://sensitivecommunity.com). Now joining me here is contemporary artist and illustrator, Trier, who is on a mission to help artists make money from their art or craft.

to grow a collector base, to grow a business without sacrificing studio time and feel really, really good about selling their work. Now, is known for her vibrant use of color using acrylic, gouache, ink, pastel, color pencil and collage. As an autistic artist with ADHD, 's creations are heavily influenced by her experience as a neurodivergent person and often reflect complex emotional themes.

Now, has worked and featured in multiple publications, private collections, and showcased in group and solo exhibitions in Denmark and the UK. She holds business degrees, sorry, she holds degrees in art history and literature and helps other artists develop business and marketing skills alongside her own art career. Welcome, . Thank you so much for being here. Thank you so much for having me. It's a pleasure.

Thank you, . Well, it has been a real pleasure for us to getting to know you and going through your website, also looking at your wonderful videos. And we'll talk about that a little bit later as well. And the collections, the colors designs, they're just beautiful. And our members have put together some wonderful questions for you today about how to grow a business to support their artistic talents. Now there's so many creative people out there.

who are longing to have a business that supports them in this way. So can you perhaps give us a little bit of background on how you first started? Yeah, absolutely. It's a long and winding road. Like I think like a lot of neurodivergent people, I took a long time to sort of find my place in the world. And I cut my teeth in tourism. Okay. So.

Andrea Weber (02:26.382)

I started off, my very first business actually was running a hotel. So I worked my way up from waitressing and cleaning the toilets up to the marketing department. And that's where I learned kind of everything I know about marketing and running a business. And in my late 20s, I realized that I just

couldn't work for somebody else anymore. It was becoming increasingly difficult to meet the demands of a workplace of being, you know, having to go and be in a certain place every day and having to sort of mask all the time and hide the needs that I had. And I know this will be familiar to a lot of the people listening to this today.

And it got to the point where I just, I couldn't handle it anymore. And I coincidentally came across a book by an amazing woman by Barbara, called Barbara Winter, who unfortunately passed away a few years ago, but it was called Making a Living Without a Job. And this was sort of in the late noughties, before the internet had really kind of kicked off. And this concept to me was just,

magnificent. Because what she was talking about was not the sort of traditional starting a business where you know, you go and you get a small business loan from the bank and you pull together all of this kind of overwhelming structured thing that you're then solely responsible for, which I'd already had experience with the hotel and I was doing it with a partner and the thought of doing that by myself just felt like too much.

But her approach was to look at your sort of your strengths, what you do naturally, what you're really good at, and just start kind of doing little bits of things for people for a little bit of money here and there, and to slowly over time build a sort of portfolio career, I think you'd call it now, a sort of an income that's made up of kind of lots of things that feel good and might be seasonal or.

Andrea Weber (04:50.126)

might kind of go in and out of your interests, you know, as an autistic person, I do have kind of very strong tendency towards special interests. So to have a sort of career that's built around that sounded fantastic. And that was really the seed for me deciding to go self employed. I started off with what I knew, which was sort of marketing from working in the hotels, and I started helping people out with their marketing.

And then in 2012, I suffered from what I thought at the time was a period of depression. What I know now was autistic burnout. And it was sort of an amazing period because I was almost completely incapacitated. I could barely get out of bed and I was utterly miserable.

And I thought to myself, well, if I'm going to be miserable, I may as well be miserable doing something that I enjoy. And that's when I really started leaning into making art again. Like it's been something that had been a thread throughout my whole life. My mother was an artist. So I always kind of grew up with it. But it was in 2012, I really, really sort of leaned in and started making art like properly. And I started...

doing, I started a blog project, basically, I figured if I was this miserable, then I needed to start looking for the joy in my life. So I started a project called the gratitude project, where I did a text based illustration and a thank you letter for somebody who had improved my life in some way. And I did one a week for the whole of I think it was 2013. So I did 52 of these illustrations and publish them on a blog.

And after a few months, people started to pay attention and I got a lot of press and I started to get people coming to me and asking for me to illustrate various things for them. And it was amazing and it actually kickstarted a sort of a new direction for me as an illustrator.

Andrea Weber (07:05.678)

So I did that for about five years. I was illustrating, I did some book projects, I did a lot of digital work, digital magazines and blog headers and that kind of stuff. And it was it was absolutely

fantastic. And I loved it until I didn't. And I found again, I was suffering from this burnout, doing things like especially being creative to somebody else's specifications.

I found really draining and gradually my personal kind of art practice dried up and I realized that I can't, this is unsustainable. I can't carry on doing this. During that time though, I had created these community projects where I brought together a bunch of people together and we talked about various aspects of being an artist.

And they were absolutely glorious. They're just a wonderful way to market my business and talk to people and lovely. So after about six months, after about, I closed down my illustration business. I had this fallow period for about six months. And then I realized that I could do these community projects for other people.

And that's what I did up until fairly recently when I decided it was time to be an artist in public again. But this time, completely on my own terms, completely to my specifications. The driving force behind everything I do at the moment is what's termed a sort of brain first business. So I come first, my needs come first, my wellbeing comes first.

And everything else has to fit into that or it can't be done. So that was a really, really, really long answer. But I hope it gives you some insight into like, this doesn't just happen, like you snap your fingers and overnight, you're sort of living your dreams. It's been a really long, slow slog over about 20, 25 years to get to this point here.

Andrea Weber (09:14.574)

Oh, look, well, thank you, . Thank you. You can take a breather for a minute. Thank you for going through all of that with us. I think that the really positive thing I think so many can take from your experience is that you've done so many different things and and your experience that you've had from each and every one of those pieces has come together for what you're now doing. And as you said, it doesn't it doesn't just happen overnight. And.

what you're describing there with the burnout and not being able to work for somebody else in somebody else's structure. So many of us can very much relate to that. And we have so many wonderful artistic members here in our community and people who would love to start something they'd love to venture out and make their creative talent into a source of income for themselves.

and to have a business that supports that, you know, rather than the other way around to actually have a business supporting your creative talents. So , I was just wondering if you could talk a little bit about how being neurodivergent influences your business. Hugely, I mean, I don't think you can extricate it from what I do. I mean, obviously I am a neurodivergent person,

And it means that I have to be really vigilant and really careful about what I'm doing. I was late diagnosed. I only got diagnosed, oh gosh, seven years ago now, I think. I was in my mid thirties. And that was really what kind of took me over there. That was at the point where I closed down

my illustration business because I suddenly had this framework where I could see like, oh, okay, I'm not.

a struggling neurotypical person. I'm actually an autistic person who is doing exceedingly well with enormous limitations. And that's really where this kind of seed of making this sustainable and making it okay to do things my way in a way that suited me. And when I was doing the community project business, which turned into sort of general sustainable marketing and energy management, I was...

Andrea Weber (11:38.83)

dealing with a lot of other neurodivergent people. And I learned so much from all the different kind of tools and techniques that people had picked up over the years to kind of support them. And I'm fortunate that I have a skill of sort of distilling that information into something, you know, communicable. So it's been really helpful for me, but it's also enabled me to help a lot of other people with that as well.

And when I decided like, okay, I want to be a full time artist, I want that to be my income, I want to be in the studio for the majority of my time, I had this enormous toolbox that I could pull on to make sure that that's actually the case, that I am actually doing this in a sustainable way. And I'm able to bring other people along with me as well and kind of share on my, I have a Patreon where I help people.

to do this to artists and creatives to think more like entrepreneurs and learn business skills. And a lot of that is kind of taking the behind the scenes of what I'm doing and where I'm falling down, where I'm having to kind of keep catching myself and go, okay, this month I fell foul of capacity optimism again. This month I had an unexpected event which kind of knocked me out of the saddle again. And this is what I'm doing to kind of bring myself back. So really I think the...

It affects everything, but I think the awareness of who I am as a neurodivergent person means that I have this kind of ability to keep myself safe. And I think before I realized I was autistic, before I had my diagnosis, before I knew that I had ADHD,

I would flail wildly and I'd get knocked off course and I'd have no way to bring myself back and I would just go into this kind of cycle of recrimination and oh my god, you're such an idiot. Why can't you do this? Why can't you know? Why can't you just stay on track? Why can't you be productive? That whole kind of negative self talk thing. And now I'm a lot kinder to myself, I think. So I went off on a tangent there. Did that answer the question?

Andrea Weber (13:55.598)

It does, it does, . And I was just going to say, I love what you said there when you realized that you weren't a neurotypical person who was struggling, but you were doing exceptionally well. When you understood and were aware of everything that you had to manage and deal with as a neurodivergent person. And I think that that understanding and that awareness is, it just changes everything for people. And,

We, our founder, Julie Bealland has discovered that she has an adult diagnosis of autism as well. And she's doing a lot of studying and research now into adult autism diagnosis, particularly for women. So we have a lot of members that can certainly relate to what you have said there. And it's, I think that awareness is everything and we are so much kinder on ourselves when we realize exactly what's going on.

And we tend to sort of stop that harsh criticism because we're all our own worst critics, right? So we tend to stop that a little bit and we give ourselves compassion and kindness when we're aware of these things. I think a lovely question, , came from, I think it was Desiree, she was talking about being neurodivergent in the business in terms of both lovely and annoying ways.

And she also mentioned, I think about perfectionism showing up. And she wanted to know if that was something that affected your work at all or had in the past, and what are some ways that you might manage this? That's such a lovely question, because I think there are lovely ways that being neurodivergent kind of shows up and is really helpful. I think, particularly,

I'm very fortunate in that I have autism and I have ADHD and the combination of the two for me is really well balanced. So my autism helps me deal with a lot of my ADHD symptoms and my ADHD helps me deal with a lot of my autism symptoms. And one of the ways that that shows up for me is I'm a huge fan of a productivity app called Notion. I'm sure you've heard of it. It's...

Andrea Weber (16:21.742)

an app where you can basically sort of build a second brain digitally and make it into whatever you need. And I have found it to be an incredible framework and it has what my autism lets me do is get very, very nerdy about tracking my, my wellbeing over time. So I track, you know,

I track my menstrual cycle. I track my energy levels every day. I track my mood every day. I track, you know, any kind of symptoms that I'm having, any kind of physical illness. So I am able to kind of gather this huge data repository where I can see like, okay, my ADHD plays up. Like I'm more likely to have ADHD symptoms at this point in my cycle.

or if I've slept badly for this number of nights, or if this has happened, or if I've eaten this. And that means that it's much, much, it's much, much easier to manage. And I'm also, I recommend this to anyone. If you have that sort of brain that allows you to be kind of on the ball with tracking how you're doing, basically.

But I really, really recommend that you do that. And it's such for both your life and your well-being, but also for your business as well. Keeping track of everything, having that data is so valuable. I also think my ability to join dots that nobody else is seeing, like pattern spotting and putting together disparate pieces of information,

that has some is something that has served me really, really well in business, I'm able to kind of spot trends that are coming down the pike, I'm able to make decisions kind of much earlier than anybody else, because I've spotted the pattern and I know what's coming. It means that having

Andrea Weber (18:39.662)

brilliant, brilliant, brilliant example of how a lovely way that neurodivergent shows up in my business is the YouTube channel. So I decided to start a YouTube channel in December. And I had never picked up a camera before. I mean, I'd used like my phone, but I had never used a proper camera. I didn't, I didn't know my f-stop from my elbow basically. And I, my husband bought me a camera for Christmas.

And over the course of about six weeks, I not only learned pretty much everything there was to know about the camera, I also learned pretty much everything that was available to know about YouTube and how to do YouTube really well, about filmmaking, about storytelling. Like I just went down this rabbit hole and hoovered up all of this information, which meant that when I launched my first video at the end of February,

it did really well. And the channel, I mean, it's been going for a couple of months. And it's, I will probably be able to get to get to reach the kind of monetization thresholds in about four months. So I'm about halfway there. Oh, that's amazing. And that wouldn't happen. I mean, it generally takes people on average a year to two years to reach that point. And I it's absolutely because I was able to just

hoover up all that and process all of this information in such a short space of time. So yay, yay autism there. And in terms of the annoying ways, a lot of it to do is to do with energy management. And for me in particular, I have this very steep sort of up and down ebb and flow cycle of

energy and enthusiasm. And when I'm in an upswing, I have a tendency to pile loads of stuff on my plate, which I then can't deal with when I go into a downswing. And I'm very, again, I'm very, very fortunate that my best friend is a neurodivergent business coach. She's a business coach for neurodivergent people. And my husband is a workflow and automation expert.

Andrea Weber (21:02.798)

So I have an amazing support network to help me with that. And slowly I'm learning how to manage that better. And one analogy, which I think is absolutely brilliant, which my husband gave me like just a couple of days ago, he said, imagine you have a string of beads. And that's your pipeline, that's your timeline, that's your energy levels, that's everything that you can manage on a day -to -day, week -to -week basis.

You have certain things, certain beads that are there. So whether that's a YouTube video every week or a Patreon video kind of twice a month, that's there. That's your sort of capacity. He said, what you're trying to do is add extra strings of beads. And he said, what you want to try and do is just add those beads into the pipeline so they're still all on this same level. And that...

absolutely blew my mind because I was trying to do all of these extra projects and then getting really frustrated and overwhelmed and completely demoralized because I just I couldn't fit it all in. And because of this kind of way of thinking, I now I can do everything that I want to do. And it just kind of shuffles everything along and like make space for it in my existing pipeline. I think that's brilliant.

I love that. That is a wonderful, wonderful analogy. And it does, it makes so much sense because we do. And I know for myself personally, if I'm trying to do lots too many, lots of little things, my energy just gets very, very scattered. And I find myself making mistakes. I'm not attending to the detail in things. I'm missing things. And then of course you, you know, that, that,

brings in frustration and you can't create when you're frustrated. And so it just kind of goes around and around. So I love that analogy, . I really, really do. And there was another question here, , about sensory input and whether or not that you find that you have any sensory issues or issues with textures. Another question we had from Desiree.

Andrea Weber (23:21.678)

She absolutely loves creating, but she dislikes getting messy and then cleaning up. She doesn't like that part of it. And I think she's looking into the digital art side of things, but then she's missing out then on that texture and that hands -on process. So I noticed, , in one of your videos when you did the studio tour, that you love everything being so organized and clean when you start a project.

But then when you're in the middle of something, you can have that wonderful complete chaos to do your creativity. And then it all comes back to this wonderfully organized, efficient environment again. So I'm just wondering if you've got any suggestions there, , for managing those sorts of sensory input sensitivities. That's such an interesting question, actually. I have a lot of sensory issues.

It's one of the biggest ways that my autism shows up is with sensations. But when it comes to painting, I have the opposite experience. Like painting for me, it's more of a sort of sensory seeking, stimming experience almost. Like I love the smell of the paint and the texture and the whole kind of sensory experience of painting. I just, I love it. And yeah.

I love the mess in the middle of it, but I have to have everything cleaned up when I'm done, or it's just overwhelming. But I think for Desiree, I think it's about exploring a lot of different media. And there are so many different things that you can make art with. So perhaps rather than using acrylic paint,

Maybe she could use something like paint markers. So you still get that sort of acrylic experience, but it's contained in a marker and you're not getting it on your hands or on your clothes or that sort of thing. Or something like a dry to wet media, like a neocolour two crayon,

which is very kind of painterly and texturally enjoyable, but is wrapped in paper so you're not getting it on your hands.

Andrea Weber (25:37.614)

And you can also use just a water brush or something to make it painterly afterwards and it will just convert into a sort of water color. So exploring those sorts of cheat mediums might be a really good way for her to kind of still get that painterly experience, but without getting sticky. That's a good point too, , that there's so many materials out there.

for people to use with art. And I think, you know, that there's, I'm just exploring getting into art again after I've let it go for a very, very long time, but it's something I've always enjoyed doing. And there's so many tools that you can use and there's so many mediums that you can use. And I loved in your studio that you love all the old paint brushes that you've left there soaking for ages.

So all the things that they tell you in art class, I guess not to do that you've got in your studio. And I just love that you went through all of those things with us. And while we're talking about the video, , I might just ask this question because as you said, you did this huge download of everything and you learned how to do things.

I guess really quickly and you sound so natural sharing yourself. And, you know, it was like we were in the studio in that video you've got of your studio. It was like we were in there and we were looking at all your bits and pieces and how they're organized and the brushes and the, your pondering chair and all of these beautiful things that you have. And it's, it's like inviting somebody into your business. So,

What would you say to people who are, I guess, struggling with that side of things in terms of the vulnerability of actually getting in front of a camera and doing that?

Andrea Weber (27:40.846)

I think there's two things to consider. One is practice. So the more you are in front of a camera, the easier it gets. And the second is boundaries. So if we're looking at practice, I first started making videos about 12 years ago and they were excruciating. Like I was...

so awkward. I didn't know what I was doing. I was just using like a webcam and I was just, oh, it was bad. It was bad. But in the last decade, I have got really, really comfortable in front of a camera because I sort of live in front of a camera. A lot of my, I mean, my work is on camera. I do a lot of interviews. I teach a lot of workshops. A lot of my relationships, I mean, I live in Denmark. A lot of my friends are in England.

So a lot of my closest relationships happen on camera. And that means that it's really easy for me to chat to a camera like it's a friend, because nine times out of 10, it's a friend on the other side of the camera. But that comes from just practice, practice, practice, practice, practice. And

if you can just get in front of a camera and record yourself every day for a month, even if you're not sharing those videos with anybody,

By the end of the month, you're gonna be so much more natural in front of a camera than you were at the beginning of the month. So yeah, practice, practice, practice. The other thing is boundaries. So understanding what parts of yourself, your life and your business you're comfortable with other people knowing about. So for me, I'm really, really happy inviting people into my studio.

I wouldn't dream of having people in the rest of the house. I certainly wouldn't have like people I wouldn't, you know, show off my bedroom or I wouldn't show off, you know, my living room, any other part of the house that's off limits. But my studio, that's open season. I mean, I have appointments where people can come, come over and visit me in the studio.

Andrea Weber (30:06.03)

This is my place of work. This is my business. So this is my shop front, really. So when it comes to being on camera, this is open season. Like I'll show you in the cupboards, I'll open the drawers, like you can root around in all the little secret places because it's open. In terms of myself, again, when I'm talking, I think I'm very...

I have a lot of personality, like I show my personality a lot when I'm on camera and when I'm doing my videos, but I'm not sharing anything particularly personal. It's all about my work. It's all about my art. It's all about what I'm doing. Or there are a few sort of nuggets that I've pre-decided I'm comfortable sharing. So like talking about my neurodivergence, I think that's really useful.

Those are the people that I prefer to hang out with, they're the people that I prefer to help. So being open about that and talking about that on camera, I'm completely fine with. I'm not gonna touch on religion or politics or, you know, my details of my relationship or those kinds of things. Like that's my private self.

And I think having an understanding of what your boundaries are before you start and deciding like what's for the public and what's for private, what's just for you. That makes it a lot easier. And you have to think like there is, of course it's authentic, of course it's me, this is who I am. But it is also a performance. It is also, this is a...

the version of me that does this thing. And that's what I'm taking you into. I'm not gonna be like crying on camera because, you know, for whatever reason, you know, I'm not sharing the intimate details of my life. This is my public persona. And whilst it is authentically me, it is curated.

Andrea Weber (32:16.622)

Does that make sense? It does. It does. and I know for myself when I first started on still getting used to the whole video thing. It's not something that I'm really well versed in. And I've started

when I joined the empowerment community and started doing various events and interviews and did a couple of self hosted events as well. And it does, it really does become easier. And I can see how I started doing video.

way back in the beginning and I'd almost like rote learned things and then I'd trip myself up because if I missed something or I missed a question or I said it the wrong way I would be completely lost and then I'd have to try and find my way back out of that somehow and I think things flow a lot more naturally now and I'm more comfortable. There's always wonderful things to learn though so I love that someone has asked that question about the video because

you sound so natural and it's so inviting because it does, it feels like you're coming into a friend's studio and you're looking at all of your beautiful artworks and it's just so comfortable and you've put it together, I think, extremely well. So, yeah, I just, I thought I'd pop that question in there, , while we were talking about all the video. I have something else that I'd like to add, if that's okay. Yes. Because I think one of the things that I know people really struggle with is,

seeing their own face and hearing their own voice. Yes. And again, this is something else that you can practice. So one of the things that I did to sort of help get over this hurdle was before I went to bed, I would spend like, I don't know, five, 10 minutes with a mirror, just looking at my own face. We tend to...

there's a psychological thing that we are more, we're more kind of positively disposed to the things that we're familiar with. So it's one of the reasons why you prefer seeing your face in the mirror to seeing it sort of like flipped when it's in a photograph. It's just because that's what we're more familiar with seeing. So the more familiar you can get with

Andrea Weber (34:40.878)

how your face looks at all different angles and what you can do to sort of, oh, I like it when I tilt my head to this side or I prefer this side of my face. So it feels kind of very vain and self-indulgence. And the same with hearing your voice, like listen to it over and over again and stop hearing it as your voice and start sort of giving yourself a little bit of distance from it.

and becoming really, really familiar with it. And then you don't get that sort of jarring like, Oh my God, is that what I sound like? Oh my God, is that what I look like? You're just like, Oh, okay, this is this is my face. This is my voice. And then you can forget about it. Yes. Yeah. That is such that is such good advice. , I think I'm going to actually I'm going to try that of the mirror technique. And it is it's I think it is.

a bit of a shock to the system when you first start and you hear yourself for the first time and you're not used to that. But again, yeah, it's becoming, it's just familiarizing yourself with it all, isn't it really? That's the key to it all really. So I know there's some excellent tips there, . So thank you for sharing that. We have a question from Ami about caring for our nervous system. And she wanted to know if you have different ways of looking after your nervous system.

when you're working on your creative artworks and when you're working on the business side of things.

Ooh, that's really interesting. I think...

Andrea Weber (36:17.774)

The issues that I come up against both when I'm doing art and when I'm doing business are a lot of it is the same stuff. So a lot of it comes from this kind of ebb and flow, peak and trough cycle. And I get so enthusiastic about things and I get so excited about things and then I bite off more than I can chew basically.

So really it's about learning to harness that huge rush of energy and excitement and stop myself just as I start to come down before I kind of crash. It's like realizing like, oh, I'm starting to lose the flow. Okay, now's the time to go and rest. And the biggest thing for me is

allowing myself to rest whenever I need to. So I might come into work and I might do a couple of hours work and then start like falling off. And just kind of start losing the plot a little bit. And that's my signal. Like I don't push through anymore. I never push through. If that starts to happen, I stop immediately and I go and rest. Because I know if I push through,

I'm losing the next one, two, three days to not being able to do anything. And if I stop and rest immediately, I can probably start again the following day. So that for me really, really is the biggest thing is stopping resting whenever I need to, even if it's inconvenience. And that's why like I, I doing my best to build this business in a way that means that that is just, that can happen. Like it doesn't.

mess anything up. And giving myself grace. Like, if I can't do something, I can't do something. If I, what I'm doing, my art and the business as well, this is, it's pure joy. I love it. I am so excited about it. I'm so enthusiastic about it.

Andrea Weber (38:36.718)

And that means that if I'm not motivated, if I'm not inspired, if I'm not feeling it for any reason, it's because I'm tired and I need to rest. And that really is it. It's just not beating myself up and being...

really, really extra kind to myself, which I still struggle with, you know, especially if I'm really want to be doing something like I have a schedule and I'm enthusiastic, I love what I'm doing. And having to stop is frustrating. But it's a lot easier if you're not then like, bitching at yourself today, beating yourself up and, you know, telling yourself how useless you are. And why can't you just because I can't I am a disabled person.

Like having, being autistic, having ADHD, these are disabilities. And in terms of, you know, how disabilities are viewed and how they show up and everything, my experience of it is that it is

relatively minor. And I'm constantly surprised that my disability is disabling sometimes. But it is, and that's okay. And we work.

within those parameters and we do the best we can. And that's, you know, that's what we can do. Yeah, I think so many of us, , that we just, we do, we push through and that's one of my big lessons because I know I'm such a doer and things have to get done. And it's, and I've always been like that. And many people are programmed like that. And I think that's where some of those perfectionist tendencies can come in as well. And as you said, that you,

you get to know the, I guess the consequences of doing that. As you said, you then take the next few days to recover from that. And I think many of us are learning self -compassion for the first time later in life, because we're understanding and we know that, as you said, if we can't do something, that's okay. We do the best that we can and that's good enough. That's okay. And that is hard for a lot of people to...

Andrea Weber (40:57.326)

actually accept and be okay with. That takes a while to, you know, to be okay and for that to flow well, I think for a lot of people, because we're so used to doing things in the opposite way. And that's how society is. It's about doing and particularly in business, there's so much pressure there to do all of these tasks and to, you know, to market and be organized. And it is, it's very overwhelming for sensitive people.

to get their heads around all of that, to make it flow well in terms of a business and to not completely be thoroughly exhausted. And then of course you lose all that, you know, that, that creativity, you're too burnt out to do that. So that's so important. Everything you've, you've just said there, , for, for sensitive people, very important. And I guess one of the things that,

probably helps you a lot there, , in terms of being organised is your space and your environment. And I love how you have designed your workspace and your studio. And I love that you have the dream of having a rooftop studio and you had lots of cupboard space and you've separated that, you separated your studio from the rest of your home so you don't get disturbed. And it's just your beautiful creative space.

and all your bits and pieces are on wheels, you move things around. And I think it's great. I actually put that link in for people to go and have a look at that video specifically because so many creative people who do any kind of art or craft I think can really take a lot from how you've set up your studio. So how important is that do you think in terms of having that environment that you love and can get inspiration from?

It's everything really. I mean, having a dedicated private space that's just for you and your creativity is an enormous privilege. Like it really, really is. And I'm, you know, I'm in my early forties now and this is the first time that I've had this and it is, I'm not kidding when I say it's a dream come true. Like it is, it is marvelous. And it really has.

Andrea Weber (43:24.622)

It's changed the way that I work. It's changed the way that I make art. I mean, before in my old apartment, I was working sort of in a corner of the living room. And it was naturally restrictive in terms of, you know, the size and the scope of the work that I could produce. And now, you know, I'm able to do these much, much larger canvases. I'm able to spread out. I have this giant easel. And because this room is just

for making arts, I can move things around, like having everything on wheels is a godsend. I can move things around, I can change it to fit whatever particular kind of art that I want to make at that particular time. So one of the things that I absolutely love to do is I'll put on an old movie or a TV series that I've seen a million times before.

I'll push one of the desks up against my computer desk. And then I've got this huge space where I can spread out and draw. But I can also just kind of be watching telly and it's this it means that it's completely it feels like I'm skiving but I'm actually working, you know, I can have the overhead camera on I can be recording myself drawing and, and it's work it's marketing but it's actually a really peaceful relaxing experience for me to do. And yeah.

just having everything sort of exactly where I need it to be. Like I know where everything is, nothing's going to get moved. It makes it very frictionless. I think a lot of there's so much resistance when it comes to art making and creativity. There's so much societal noise about art making. Like I think one of the most pervasive and damaging ideas about creativity,

is that it's about what you make and what you make has to be good, which is completely backwards. Because the thing that really matters about creativity is the process of doing it. It's the fact that you're moving and processing emotions, like you're moving emotions through your body, you're engaged in something manual, like we're designed.

Andrea Weber (45:47.79)

as a species to do things with our hands and not just, you know, clicking a mouse all the time. Like we're designed to be doing things. And in terms of, you know, life skills, like your problem solving ability, your ability to calm and regulate your nervous system and your emotions, your ability to, you know, to join the dots and to think in a critical and creative way is all enhanced by

doing something creative with your hands. And it's the process that is the most important thing. I do a lot of sketchbook tours on my YouTube channel. Like I'll take people inside, like my working sketchbooks. And one of the comments that I get most frequently is that people are so inspired by the fact that they're not books full of completed artworks. Like,

This is my, the thought process that goes on behind the completed artworks. Like this is my rough document. And I think that's really indicative of this crazy sort of idea that I think Instagram has played a big part in that every single thing an artist or a creative person produces is this sort of magnificent masterpiece, this beautiful creation. And it's,

utter nonsense. I mean, most of what I produce is, it's like half baked. It's a thought, it's an idea. It's like, oh, a color combination that's just come to me or a quick scribble of an idea that I'll develop later. And a lot of it is just is nonsense. It's not it's not good. But it's all valuable. It's all necessary. It's all important. And it's all what enables me to produce.

beautiful final works of art. But yeah, it's a process with so many of these things, falling in love with the process of doing something, not only is way more important than the outcome, but it also makes the outcome better generally, because you're removing all of that tension, you're removing all of those expectations. And I'd say that is as much true with making art.

Andrea Weber (48:12.27)

as it is with running a business, like falling in love with the process of having and building a structured, streamlined, energy efficient business is far more important than whatever the outcome is that you're hoping for. Like the way you get there is through the process. I definitely agree. And I think that's what we need to do. I think we try to do with marketing and organizing.

is that typically those parts of the business are not parts of the business that people really enjoy and they become a chore that has to be done or the admin or whatever else we were struggling with. And we enjoy all the creative side of it, but it's about finding that joy and ease, I guess, with some of the other things that are involved in the business side. So there's a couple of questions here, , about...

the organizing and the marketing side of things. And a question was asked about whether or not you batch your business and marketing tasks and do you keep them like completely separate from your painting and your creations? And do they feel like different modes or like completely different moods to be in when you're doing one or the other?

I think this is so funny, because no, absolutely not. I mean, I market my creative business by being creative on camera, like visibly. And that's one of the sort of the crucial things that I do and that I teach other people to do with this as well, is I want to make a living by being an artist.

not necessarily from the outcome of being an artist from selling the final pieces. Like that's just one revenue stream that I'm interested in. And I treat my marketing using a process that I like to call operation Marmite. Now, I don't know if you do you have Marmite? I think you have like Vegemite in Australia, don't you? We do. We have both. You have both? Yeah. So Marmite is...

Andrea Weber (50:27.694)

a very interesting substance. It's it's a basically, basically, it's the slurry, the runoff from the brewing process. Yes. And it's a very sort of very intensely flavoured thing that, as it says in their marketing, you either love it or you hate it, which is marketing genius, by the way. But what it is, is somebody looked at their brewing operation.

And thought, excellent, we're making a lot of money on beer, but we've got all this gunk. I wonder if we can do something with it. Like, we're going to get this gunk anyway, so maybe

there's an opportunity there. And this, I think this is the sort of mindset you need to have. Like, if you are an artist, if you are a creative person, the way that society views...

people who are creative, I mean, we're all creative, but the way that society views people who are creative is almost with this sort of mystique, like they're sort of magical creatures. And that works to our advantage because we can literally take people behind the scenes and that's our marketing. Like people are obsessed with seeing, I think it's mad, like time lapses of people drawing are...

huge. And I, I, they're not my cup of tea, particularly, but whenever I do a time lapse of me drawing, people just lose their shit, they go nuts for it. Um, and that's great, because like I just said, I'm just sat there drawing, watching the telly, like having a lovely afternoon. And that's me marketing my business, I record it, I whack it up on YouTube, or I put it on Instagram or something. And that's my marketing done. Um,

So, when I decided to do being a full-time artist as a business, that was my primary concern. Like, what's my Marmite? What are the things that I'm going to be doing anyway? And how can I find a way to either, to monetize them, either directly, like I do this and money happens, or indirectly in terms of I do this, people find out about me, and then money happens.

Andrea Weber (52:50.606)

So everything that I'm doing, I mean, the YouTube, for example, the YouTube is fantastic in terms of straight up marketing. Like it gives people an insight into who I am, into my artwork, into what I'm doing. It channels people towards my mailing list. It brings people into my ecosystem. It's brilliant for discoverability. All of those things are fantastic in and of themselves.

All of those things happen just because I set up a video camera and do what I would be doing anyway in my studio in private. Also, when you hit a certain threshold on YouTube, they pay you. They pay you to do your marketing. I mean, it's perfection. So I'm getting that indirect path to cash. You know, it's marketing, which leads to people knowing about me, which is cash.

And it's also direct, I do this thing, I get cash. The Patreon is something else. Like I am never going to stop talking to people about running a business that works for your brain and having sustainable systems and building like what a business actually is and how it's put together and how it can be super efficient and run in a way that means that you get to spend all of your time doing what you love.

And so the Patreon is a perfect opportunity for me to do that and get paid for it. And it's a really kind of it's a low easy yes for people. It's a it's a low price. It's great value. And again, it helps with discoverability. It helps people find out about me at points people to employ email list. And all I'm doing with this is generating a bunch of people who are really into what I'm doing. They're into my artwork, they're into my attitude.

A lot of them are neurodivergent. My art is about, you know, being neurodivergent. I'm building an audience for my final artwork at the same time. And it all comes from the runoff, the slurry from being an artist and living as an artist. Yeah. And so that's, that's my driving force. So no, the business and the marketing are not separate from the making the art. I am.

Andrea Weber (55:07.95)

I am an artist, I make art and the business and marketing happen as a result of me making my art. Wonderful, yeah. I'm so pleased you explained all that, , because we do, we often see all of these different tasks and we don't see them as organic processes, the whole of what we're doing. It's something separate over here or it's, you know, separate time over there. But as you said, it's part of...

what you do and you've just brought that into putting it all, all the pieces together to make it work in terms of marketing. And so it does because it's just part of that natural process. So I think that's really the key, I think, because we've done a lot of, we did a lot of focus on marketing last year in the community. And we learnt a lot from that because so many of the traditional ways of doing it, they just don't suit sensitive systems at all.

And you've just explained it beautifully there from the perspective of somebody who's very creative and is using it as part of that organic process. So that is wonderful. There's so much I think we can all take from that, . So thank you for that explanation. And I think that answers all of our questions, . And you've given us so much to go away and think about and consider. And I just...

love all of your collections. I love Wibbly Wobbly especially, I absolutely love. I'm thinking how on earth can so many beautiful vibrant colours be in all of these little cats and I know everyone has had so much fun looking at your art and it's been such an inspiration getting to know your work , getting to know you, talking with you today and

If people would like to find out more about your work, , and connect with you, what would be the best ways for them to do that? The best thing to do is to come over to my website, which is eleanortreastudio.com and sign up for my email list. That's the sort of central point where everything else that I'm doing kind of gets collected into. I send out a monthly studio bulletin and it basically has a roundup of everything that's been going on.

Andrea Weber (57:32.43)

So yes, if you want to keep in touch and also you'll get like first look at new collections. I've got a studio sale coming up in the next month and a half or something. So there'll be opportunity to buy some work. You can have the opportunity to have your say on kind of print releases and that sort of thing. So yeah, that's the absolute best place to be. Obviously I have a YouTube channel as well, which is called Zuzu's House of Cats.

Yes. And I have a Patreon, which is the YouTube channel is very much focused on my own sort of art and my creative practice. And the Patreon is much more focused on the business side of

things. So how to how to run a business that works. Thank you, . Thank you so much for all of your wonderful time today. It's been an absolute pleasure.

And thank you everyone for being with us here as well. Just remember if you would like to be part of our nurturing community, you can join us at [sensitivecommunity .com](http://sensitivecommunity.com) and we look forward to connecting with you there. Thank you so much, . I'm Andrea Weber. And if you would like to pop onto my website and have a look at [expansivehappiness .com](http://expansivehappiness.com), you can see.

all of my work there. So I really appreciate your time, . Thank you so much. And we'll be sure to add all of that information in the links below. Thank you. Thank you.