

## EP1 Transcript

Welcome to the creative genius captivated podcast. My name is Yiqing Zhao, a miserable medical student turned award-winning actor, filmmaker and creativity coach. While my man literally means artistic youth in Chinese it took me almost a decade to find my calling and path. I help multi-hyphenates overcome burnout, unleash their creativity and become unstoppable using mindset and customized strategies.

Let's dive in.

Hello? Hello. Hello. Finally, I'm here. This is the first episode. So I think it's a perfect place for me to tell you a little story about how I became who I am today. So I was a medical student in China. I was in a very intense medical program. Five-year program, much more advanced than pre-med.

And during my last year, that was 2014. I was doing this thesis study on rats. It was a depression study and I was supposed to make the rats depressed and then treat them with a combination of acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine. But I failed, I did not make them depressed because they were super resilient.

I made myself depressed. So that was my wake-up call. I couldn't sleep for three months. I was like a ghost. I couldn't, I just couldn't function like a normal human being. So I thought, what was the point? If I were to treat people's physical bodies, but I, myself suffering. My mind, my soul, I was suffering a lot of emotional pains.

So I would say that was the turning point. When I started to know that I was going to live for myself because, okay. Here's a funny thing. I was a gifted child. I published my very first piece of writing when I was seven years. And make my very first paycheck of my life at the age of seven, from that little piece of writing that got published in a local newspaper, and I've been publishing all the way until I got into middle school.

And that was also that the onset of puberty. And I felt like that was the point where I started to get conscious. I started to think about all the expectations that were placed on me because before that I was just a kid. I was. Super gifted kid who got newspaper. Who got articles published who got TV interviews.

And then all of a sudden I'm like, oh, the voices, all the, you know, my parents were telling me, you know, you need to go get into a great college. You need to. So when I was 11, 12 getting into middle school, I started living for to meet those expectations. And that was really the beginning of my suffering.

And that was the beginning of my creative block. I've had a very long creative block, I would say from 12 to 18 or 19. So like a seven or eight year creative block. I was not only creatively blocked. I was also suffering from a series of health issues. So those things were connected. So I was also suffering in college.

And the suffering, like I said, became, I pretty much hit the rock bottom in 2014 when I was doing that depression study. Okay. I did not go on a tangent. I promise because my point is, after a decade of living to meet other people's expectations, I st

arted in 2014. I realized I needed to live for myself.

And that realization was just so powerful because after that my health dramatically improved, believe it or not. And while I wasn't really sure exactly what I was going to do, I knew at the time I wanted to be an actor. And interestingly enough, in college, I tried pretty much every single form of performing.

That you can think of that you can do on a stage like public speaking, debating, hosting, singing, dancing, playing the piano, all of those things, except for acting, because I did not have the time to rehearse because I was in a medical program. When I got my offer and a scholarship to go to Johns Hopkins for a master's in public health.

And at that time I still have two months to go before college graduation. I just realized, okay. I have two months of my life free time entirely belonged to me, to myself only. That was when I started to really let the seed in my heart grow and the seed. Myself was living for myself, becoming who I actually am.

So I decided that I was going to be an actor doing that two months of free time when I was exploring things. And also here's the thing, right? Because I got the offer. I knew what I was going to be doing. So I was not stressed. And when you are relaxed, you are more likely to be creative because creativity can not survive in stressful situation.

So I just knew I was, I was going to be an actor, but I didn't know how I had no connections. I was in China at the time, but you know, leaving for us in two months. So I did something very bold. I Googled some local theater companies in Baltimore and I started sending cold emails. I didn't even have a headshot. I didn't even have resume. I didn't have anything. I just started sending out cold emails, telling them who I am, why I wanted to be an actor and asking them for auditions. Of course, I didn't hear from any of them. Of course. So I forgot about it. And then two months later, this theater company, single carrot theater, they reached back to me.

They reached, they got back to me and said, you can come in for an audition so that was how I made my regional debut in 2015. And a few months later, I got an internship in New York and I started auditioning in New York. And in the summer of 2015, I made my New York debut. And that was the beginning of everything.

That was the beginning of my transformation journey of becoming who I am today. Of course there's more to that, but I am going to save that for later. I noticed something. And this is also my invitation to you to think about what were you doing when you were 11 years old? Like 11, 12, 10, 11, 12 at the time, because that was the time when, and first of all, I did not take credit for this question.

I watched this, I think it's Hollywood, Round table with Natalie Portman and Michelle Williams. And that was the question that they were talking about. So I took notice of that and looking back at my own experience what was I doing when I was 11 or 12 years old, I wrote, produced and directed a show and put it up in front of my classmates.

I was this playwright. I was this director. I O I also acted in it. I played the teacher. I remember. So basically I put up a show and that's exactly what I'm doing now. I produce theater. I make films I'm still making films. And, you know, it's still acting, directing

ecting, writing. So I remember Natalie, Portman and Michelle Williams were talking about, you know, what you were doing at the time, pretty much sets the tone of what you're going to be doing later in your adult life.

And, well, it took me over a decade to get back to what I was, what I set out to do, what I was meant to be doing. It took me over a decade to find this, but I just wanted to. To acknowledge that. And I really want to invite you to think about it is that this is something that you already have. This thing that you really, really want to do is something that you already have.

It's just like, I already have that when I was 11 or 12, but we tend to forget it. Or, you know, some mind chatter and your parents' voice, your spouse's voice or whoever's voice was telling you that did not matter, but you know, better than anyone. But that matters, but the thing that you were meant to do matters, and for a lot of us, it's creativity, it matters.

And here's the interesting thing, right? I remember I said about how my health was in, you know, health-wise. I was in a very bad place when I was creatively blocked. And after I finally made the decision to become a creative again, my health drastically improved. So that really is a sign that your body is built for this, that you are meant to do this because it's like the universe is telling you that your body is built for this thing for, to create your body is built to sing or to dance, to write, to act, to create your mind. And souls are built for that. So if you're experiencing health issues, I am not a health or wellness coach. I can't really speak too much about it. Although I do have a degree in medicine and public health, I really think there is a connection in that it's a mind, body connection. So I think whatever health issues that you are experiencing right now, look back into your soul. Look back into your mind and ask yourself why is that? That's why a lot of the health conditions are related to stress and then stress and creativity stresses like the number one killer of creativity. It's really because of that. So this episode, yes. This episode is about finding your gem, finding your calling.

And I think. I am just giving you an example of how I found my calling. And I know I'm certainly not the only one. I know so many actors writers, they gave up their engineering background or I quit law school. It's really the same thing is that when you know, you're meant to do something and you just know, and it's less about taking drastic action towards something. And it's more about acknowledging that deep seated knowledge in your guts, acknowledge that and take tiny steps towards bringing the truth to life. It's not about quitting your nine to five now and become an actor or, you know, making some big gesture, sweeping gestures to change careers. It does take a while, but all the change steps from the knowledge that knowing this is what I am meant to do, acknowledge it, honor it, and make a choice, make a decision to bring it to life little by little, even if that means you only write 20 minutes a day and you stick with it. And then you see, is there any way that you can create those writings?

You can make those writings. Seen. Or it's about starting to audition. Get your first audition, get a no and get your second edition. Get to know, get your 10th 20th, 3

0th, 50th audition eventually you will get a yes and then you build from there. So that's how you find your true callings. And that's how you, by becoming your best friend by really listening to your gut.

You will find it because you already have it. It's not something that you need to think about. It's not something that you need to come up with. It is already in you. And what you do is to listen and to take baby steps, to bring it to life okay. I think that's it for today because this is the first episode.

And you know, there are so many more to come, so stay tuned and do find me on my website and Instagram. And you will actually see me have fun with all sorts of creative stuff. All right. Stay tuned. See you next week. Hey, thanks for hanging out with me. You're now one step closer to having the creative life and career you want.

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If you would like to deepen the work, go visit <https://coaching.yiqingzhao.com> to find out how to work with me, or you can hang out with me on Instagram @yiqingzhao1222. If you would like to receive a Freebie

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All right, I'll see you next time. In the meantime, take care. Happy creating. Bye