

Ep #83: (Part 2) The Power of Questioning with Maggie Reyes



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With Your Host

Leah Badertscher

[The Art School Podcast](#) with Leah Badertscher

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Maggie: That's the obstacle I have to overcome. Now I know if I'm singing, I need to sing at 6:00am or I need to sing at 6:00pm or some other time, right?

Leah: Right.

Maggie: I have to go outside under the tree and do my scales outside, maybe I need to take a walk. It's we anticipate for the obstacle and suddenly we can with a higher degree of confidence say, "No matter if these five things happen, I am still planning to win. I am still going to do the thing that makes my heart sing."

Leah: The other thing that I love about that is that it is like a fundamentally creative approach to life, rather than reactive, and rather than default. And that is also where there's so much creativity in your work, because rather than accepting a default. And like you said, maybe getting, something's not quite right.

Well, I guess I just live with them, instead of taking a creative approach, thinking about what you want to create, envisioning and creating that. And then loving that so much, and believing in that so much that you're like, what might keep me from that? What might come up to challenge me? And being proactive, again, creative, but how you'll encounter that. And encounter that in a way that is like calls upon your higher self. And this might be challenging for me, this might push buttons, but I want to come from a place, like an ennobled place, a place of community and love.

Maggie: Yes, I love that so much and I love thinking about this Olympian mindset, because I never need to compete in the Olympics to feel like I am

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an Olympic level at what I do. And for all of our listeners, it's like you don't have to necessarily compete in the actual Olympics, you can be the best artist, you can be the best of whatever it is that your creativity is, yeah.

Leah: Yeah. And I think it is raising the baseline, the standards, a world well loved is an Olympic caliber. That is what I'm talking about when I talk about an extraordinary way of being. I don't mean extraordinary as in elite, like it's only meant for the Olympic athletes. I mean extraordinary as let's open our hearts and minds and decide that we can create a world well loved. We can think and know of ourselves as artists and creatives in a way that our whole baseline... that planning... that we plan to win.

Maggie: Yes, I love that so much.

Leah: Thank you, Maggie.

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That was a clip from a conversation I had with Maggie Reyes, master marriage coach. We recorded the conversation back in April, and while the theme may be marriage, as you just heard from that exchange we had there. I think the universal theme applies, what it means to be creative. What it means to be in a process of revolution, whether that is in your own life or the world at large.

So listen in today because whether or not you are in a partnership, in a marriage. Or whether you are working on relationships in general, I do think there is so much to be gleaned from this conversation. When you look at it from the meta level, of how to create something that is not yet your experience, and how to move through that process. Acting from a place of

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nobility, strength, vulnerability and also love, it is a love that acts, that doesn't spiritually bypass, it is a love that acts and absolutely creates.

You are listening to *The Art School Podcast*; a show for artists and creatives who want to become the next greatest version of themselves. Learn how to cultivate an extraordinary way of being and take the mystery out of making money, and the struggle out of making art. Here is your host, master certified life coach, artist, and former lawyer, Leah Badertscher.

Hello, everyone and welcome back. You know, there's been a few podcasts I've recorded where from week to week I am astonished at what has changed, so from just a week when I last spoke with you and last recorded a podcast. So if you're listening to this sometime in the future, I'm recording this early June. We are in the hot and tragic aftermath of the brutal murder of George Floyd and the violence and the uprisings, the protests sense, and also in the middle of a fire of awakening.

And as I mentioned in the part one of this interview with Maggie, which I recorded back in April, so we were in the midst of another crisis situation, Covid. And racism has always been a crisis in this country in America, and I know many other places around the world. And now it is literally in front of everybody's eyeballs as it should be, and at the front of hearts and minds everywhere.

And I know if you're listening to this podcast, if you have for a while and you are still tuned in, I'm going to make a lot of assumptions about you. And then also I'm going to be completely transparent that I'm not an antiracism expert, educator. And I'll share some of the work that I have done, I'm going to tie in what Maggie has to say here and some of my own coaching work at the end, not to make this about me.

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But because I think it may be a helpful model for those of you who do resonate with this desire to create change. That you are wanting to do better and not just think that, and you are wanting to love and not just state that, but really to be an example of that. And again, I'm not holding myself out as the epiphany of any great example. Actually rather, I'm just holding myself out as a human who is alive right now, and doing what I can with where I am, and also educating myself, knowing that I can be resourceful and knowing that we can all do better.

And also going heart wide open, mind wide open, feeling all the feels, being willing to be vulnerable and wrong without, of course, wanting to hurt anyone. But also knowing that we need to have these difficult conversations, and it's going to include a lot of flailing and fumbling through, and it's going to be messy.

I did a free group coaching call yesterday, and one of the things that I shared with that group was years ago when I was a fairly new lawyer and I also had decided that anything like litigation was not for me. I was told by somebody that I would make a really great transformative mediator.

So I signed up, I went to the training and one of the first activities we did was that the facilitator asked us to line up at the front of the room on this continuum. Where you lined up from the least conflict averse, meaning you kind of love conflict, confrontation, and to the other side of the spectrum where you just don't, you don't like conflict, you have a low tolerance for it or a high aversion for it.

And there were, not surprisingly, a lot of other lawyers in the room, not everybody there was a lawyer, there were therapists and clergy and other people. So some of the lawyers were on the end of the spectrum where they really loved conflict, and on the other end of the spectrum, which is

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where I put myself, were those that are very conflict averse. And I was young, still in my 20s at the time, I knew this was something I still needed to work through, an aversion to conflict. I was not averse to a lot of hard things in my life, but conflict for sure.

And the facilitator reminded us of two really great humans and humanitarians, Abraham Lincoln and Gandhi, who were lawyers and were actually very conflict averse. That always stuck with me. And he shared this quote from the Dalai Lama that said, "Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts, differences will always be there."

And that's the part that really stuck with me and rang true. Because I realized, there is no true peace when you are feeling yourself fragile. That you can't go into conflict and be changed by it, that you can't hear something that conflicts with what you think or you can't use your voice to speak out to authority, or to somebody, empower somebody that seems to have more power than you.

You can't use your voice in situations that might seem where you're vulnerable, either that vulnerability being emotional, or that vulnerability being literal, meaning you fear for your life, or you're in bodily danger or in harm's way. Anyway, didn't want to be the kind of agent for peace that was a fragile and a superficial agent for peace. I didn't want to just maintain an illusion of peace and smooth things over. But really it's just this tense ceasefire on the surface. I wanted to feel stronger than that.

And I also realized that I wanted to believe that there is something greater than just a fragile peace where you are avoiding conflict, and avoiding the hard places. And so that transformative mediation training a long time ago was so valuable, not just from a professional perspective, but really just an

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initiation on my own journey and to what it does, what's available to us in terms of peace.

And having the willingness to go into hard places, and I think that's required of all of us now, and I think that's too why community, like this Art School community, the communities where you are, where it's important for us to have these conversations. And then also to take these conversations to the streets and do something with it and not just talk and then feel good, because we've theorized or talked, but to create real change.

And again, to hang on to the knowing that change is possible, to be eyes wide open, be awake right now to what the current circumstances really are, to look at that unflinchingly. And I do think they will address issues and move forward, it will be without me.

I hadn't had much involvement in the community for a while anyway, and again, though while I saw value – great value and grateful for many of the things that I got from the community. To me there was just a line that was crossed and something that before to me I thought I could disagree politely with, philosophically about the place of the model.

And so my differences and philosophy, when it was more of an academic discussion, more theory, I was willing to stay in this space. But again, when some things came to the surface that I wasn't aware of about white supremacy and racism that I just fundamentally do not agree with, then I decided I can continue to disagree. I'm continuing to be open to challenge and discourse.

But at the end of the day I want to put theory and philosophy down and actually open up and listen to what people are saying, especially when they are saying they are hurt. And so this is again something I will share in the

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Coach with Me section of this. And I get the tenor of course, of this episode, is much different than I had anticipated the tenor of this conversation with Maggie. And at the same time I can't apologize for that, you all, because this is the nature of the world today.

And I think, again, like I said, it is messy, it is not clean, there is no like I can't artificially separate what's going on in the world. And then just move into a light and airy, Maggie's work remains to me, critically important, even more than ever I do think much of our activism can start with activism in our homes.

But I also know – I shouldn't say 'but', and I also know part of what's needed from us is to look at our homes in a bigger way. Look to think of our lives as not just, well, I haven't experienced it; therefore it's not really happening. But if we consider our home, our community, our estate, our country, the world at large, I do think, you know, Mother Teresa's quote, "If everyone swapped their own doorstep the whole world would be clean," applies.

And I think too, though, we need to look at where we are thinking our doorstep is smaller than it is. That it's just taking care of us and that things that are happening in the world, again, if they haven't affected us directly, then we think they don't pertain to us, or that it's not happening, or that it isn't actually affecting us, and it does.

So with that, I hope you soak in the ray of light that Maggie Reyes is here. And I do want for all of you, a partnership well loved, a life well loved, a world well loved. And I hope this episode lands with you as effusion of ways where that's not just pretty talk. Creativity is not just pretty talk, not just theory and abstract, it's gritty and it's real, and it's doing the work, and

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it's why we are human and alive right now. Think of it like, why am I human and alive right now.

So, again, soak up some of Maggie's sunshine and her words of wisdom, think about how it can apply to your life in ways big and small, to relationships and then also the world at large, and I will see you on the other side.

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Maggie: I would love to share that story, so here's what happened, you guys, behind the scenes. I was coaching a client on an issue she was having in her marriage and we were just having a very, like regular run of the mill everyday coaching call where she was upset about something. And I was asking her, "Well, what is the result she wanted to create, and what could get in the way, and how can we solve for that obstacle of whatever's getting in the way?" And we did a whole exercise on it. We came up with three or four things that she could do.

And afterwards, when we finished doing that she said, "I have to tell you something." She said, "I just heard a podcast, they were interviewing Michael Phelps, who's this Olympian swimmer who's won multiple gold medals." And she said, "This thing that you just did with me, just through this little thing with me and my husband, that isn't even a really huge, it's not like a marriage breaker." It was just something she needed to deal with, so it didn't pile up.

So she said, "This thing we just did," she said, "Michael Phelps and his coach asked him, "What could go wrong, what could get in the way between you and winning your gold medal?" And made him think about what are all the obstacles that could come up. And Michael did, and it's a

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very famous story now where his goggles could come off. So my client's telling me the story, just to share the story.

I was like, "Tell me more." So she said, "His goggles could come off so he had to calculate what would he do, he had to anticipate the obstacle of what he would do if his goggles came off. And he said, "Well, he'd have to count the laps, he'd have to count how many strokes it took from wall to wall, so that he could know where he was at any given moment in the pool, if he could not visually confirm where he was in the pool.""

And so in true heroic fashion, his goggles did come off and he had to count his laps and he still won a medal even when that happened. So she was telling me the story, and when I finished the call and I started thinking about it, I was like, we plan to win. That is what we do. We go to the Olympics with the intention of winning. We don't go to the Olympics to just go on a trip.

And when you're creating art, you're creating art to change the way the world sees something, whatever your vision is that adds to the world. And for me, when I'm thinking about marriage, it's just like I want to have a world where people are well loved.

And I have this whole other soapbox thing about it that a well loved person does not go to war. A well loved person is not violent. A well loved – like the way we can change the world from my creativity, the way I creatively contribute is that I think the better we know how to love we make the world more peaceful with every relationship that works better. So I am playing to win, I am Olympic gold medal level playing. So that's what we have in common among many other things.

Leah: Yeah, a world well loved.

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Maggie: Yes. Yes.

Leah: Yeah, that's the gold medal times infinity.

Maggie: Yes. Yes, yes.

Leah: Maggie, beautiful. Beautiful. And I was going to ask you about your intention for the work. But you just stated it so beautifully there, a world well loved, plan to win, planning to win.

Maggie: Planning to win, and then we plan, and so there's this great research where if you write down your goals, you're exponentially more likely to achieve them. But the second half or the second wave of that, the more recent research is if you write down your goal and anticipate the obstacle for the goal, it becomes exponentially more likely that you achieve it, which is why we do that in our coaching all the time, right?

Leah: Yes, right. Right, because it's one thing to do an ideal day, if you just [inaudible]. It's another thing to do it while you're still acknowledging you're a human being, and then for that human being it's in a difficult scenario. And then see how your future self, your higher self moves through a very challenging scenario. That then I think gives your spirit trust and traction.

Maggie: Absolutely. And it just makes it – think about the simplicity of this Olympic example where he knew, he had to sit and think. He didn't just have the answer, what would I do if my goggles fell off? I would have to know exactly where I was in the pool at any given time. How can I calculate that? It's not like in the moment when his goggles fall off, he could figure that out. He had to do that way before and then practice counting his strokes and knowing this many strokes I'm this far away from the wall of the pool.

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So you can imagine that people are saying to us, I'm imagining like painters, and writers, and sculptors, like all these beautiful creative endeavors. Okay, the world is in a situation now it's never been in before, it was hard – it may have been hard to have time to write, or create, or sculpt, or paint before. How am I going to make sure that I have my art in my day? Okay, first question.

Second question, what are the obstacles that are going to come up? I might have kids at home, I might have someone in my life is home and working now and now I have to account for. If I'm singing, I can't sing my scales in the middle of the Zoom call with their boss. So that's the obstacle I have to overcome. Okay, now I know if I'm singing I need to sing at 6:00am or I need to sing at 6:00pm or some other time, right?

Leah: Right.

Maggie: I have to go outside under the tree and do my scales outside, maybe I need to take a walk. It's we anticipate for the obstacle and suddenly we can with a higher degree of confidence say, "No matter if these five things happen, I am still planning to win. I am still going to do the thing that makes my heart sing."

Leah: The other thing that I love about that is that it is like a fundamentally creative approach to life, rather than reactive, and rather than default. And that is also where there's so much creativity in your work, because rather than accepting a default. And like you said, maybe getting, something's not quite right.

Well, I guess we just live with them, instead of taking a creative approach, thinking about what you want to create, envisioning and creating that. And then loving that so much, and believing in that so much that you're like,

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what might keep me from that? What might come up to challenge me? And being proactive, again, creative, but how you'll encounter that. And encounter that in a way that is like calls upon your higher self. And this might be challenging for me, this might push buttons, but I want to come from a place, like an ennobled place, a place of community and love.

Maggie: Yes, I love that so much and I love thinking about this Olympian mindset, because I never need to compete in the Olympics to feel like I am an Olympic level at what I do. And for all of our listeners, it's like you don't have to necessarily compete in the actual Olympics, you can be the best artist, you can be the best of whatever it is that your creativity is, yeah.

Leah: Yeah. And I think it is raising the baseline, the standards, a world well loved is an Olympic caliber. That is what I'm talking about when I talk about an extraordinary way of being. I don't mean extraordinary as in elite, like it's only meant for the Olympic athletes. I mean extraordinary as let's open our hearts and minds and decide that we can create a world well loved. We can think and know of ourselves as artists and creatives in a way that our whole baseline... that planning... we plan to win.

Maggie: Yes, I love that so much.

Leah: Thank you, Maggie. So in the final moments remaining, I want to make sure because I always get caught up in conversation, and forget to ask people this, if people want to find your podcast, your book, if they want to learn more about working with you. Can you talk about where they can find you? And maybe what opportunities there are to work with you?

Maggie: Absolutely. So the best place to go is my website which is maggiereyes.com, and I'm sure we'll link to it in the show notes, but it's m.a.g.g.i.e.r.e.y.e.s, like a ray of sunshine. So at maggiereyes.com, you'll

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find the link to my podcast. The podcast is called The Marriage Life Coach Podcast. And I make it super fun, so you'll totally have to come over and check it out. There's a link to that on my site. So any way that you want to check me out, you can do that there.

And I work currently, we're recording this in 2020, and in 2020 I work one-on-one with my clients for six month coaching cycles. We do very deep, very intimate work together, and all that information is on my site as well.

Leah: Do you also have information, because I happen to know, not only do I know you from the Life Coach School, but I also know you have gone through many other trainings [inaudible]. And this industry is fascinating and impressive, do you mind sharing a little bit about that?

Maggie: Sure, yeah. You know what, that's a great reminder, you guys, I need to update my website with all of that, none of that is actually on there.

Leah: Because we've got to keep up with like everything you've done.

Maggie: Okay, so here is the scoop, I love knowledge, I love learning, when you do a Gallup Strength, the Gallup StrengthsFinder, my top two things were mentorship, surprise, surprise, and learning, shocks and all. Those are the things. So here's a couple of things. I love The Gottman Institute, for our listeners who may have never heard of them, they're a research institute that just researches marriage. And they look at the marriages that work and they look at the marriages that don't work, and then they create interventions according to the research that they have found.

So I love doing evidence based creativity, so to speak. So with them they have several levels of training, so I am a coach, they usually train therapists, but their level one training anyone can attend. So I got my tushy

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in that chair over there. And they just sort of lay out all the research for you and all that, so, Gottman is one.

There is a fabulous psychologist, her name is Michele Weiner-Davis, she has written many books, *The Sex-Starved Wife*, she's written *Healing from Infidelity*, amazing. She was on the team that helped develop solution focused therapy, brief solution focused therapy which is sort of like the godmother of coaching, if you kind of look at that.

So she was on the team that helped develop that and she's one of my absolute heroes. And I got to attend a training last year in Boulder, I spent the week with her in Colorado and got to be trained personally by her, which is just unbelievably awesome. So she's one of my mentors now as well, which is great.

And then, oh my gosh, I probably have trained in a bunch of things, it's a long list. I'm a little embarrassed, you guys, this is embarrassing.

Leah: No, because I think it's a testament to your love of the subject and also your deep commitment to your clients and to the world. And I think I've also see you've gone to Esther Perel.

Maggie: Oh my gosh, okay, yeah. Two things I have to mention, so Esther Perel did a training on how to help your clients overcome infidelity and I went to that training. And it was phenomenal, and it opened my brain to things I hadn't seen any other way before. And I have taken that and incorporated that into my practice. And I just absolutely love her influence and the way that she just sees the world.

And one thing I learned from her, which I want everyone to know, is there's no wrong reason to want to stay married, there's no wrong reason. So

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there's a little bit of stigma if there's an infidelity to go, "You should drop them like a hot potato, why would you stay with that person?" And it's much more complicated when you're actually living it. And maybe you've been married for 15 years or 20 years.

And her hypothesis, which I subscribe to, is that your marriage is an ecosystem. And there's all these different elements in the ecosystem that include where you live, where your kids go to school, who your friends are, all these different parts of your life. And people narrow this decision to just one thing and don't consider all these other parts of your life.

And I have had clients, it's a true story, who hired me when they weren't sure if they were going to stay or they were going to go. And at the moment the only reason they were staying was because they wanted their kid to stay in the school that they were in, literally, stuff like that.

Now, the one I'm thinking of in particular started coaching for that reason, ended up completely reinvigorating her marriage and it's like at a whole other level right now. But when we parted from this non-judgmental, completely compassionate place where there's no wrong reason to stay married, that opened up, okay, well, right now I'm just kind of staying because it just feels this is the right thing to do for my kid. And then we were able to access all these other opportunities to love, to forgive, to learn, to grow just from that.

So, Esther Perel is amazing, and the last one is there's a wonderful institute by a woman named Layla Martin, that is called The Tantric Institute for Integrated Sexuality, which is very body based. It's like the somatic side of the psychology. So in the Life Coach School we studied the brain and the cognitive side, and because I talk to people about their relationships, and guess what, people have sex, it's the thing they do.

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And I realized as a coach I needed to understand sex beyond just a person who has sex, but to hold space for creativity and love, and passion in ways that weren't necessarily just my own experience, but a broader experience. And so I got to study with Layla Martin, so if you follow Leah, and you kind of know Brooke Castillo, so Layla is like the Brooke of sex, to give you kind of an idea around that.

Leah: So, Maggie, that tells me if you're up for it, can we do another episode some time where we talk about sex and creativity, and creativity and sex?

Maggie: Totally we can, yes.

Leah: I mean creativity, and creativity, and creativity, and creativity?

Maggie: Yes. Yes, we can.

Leah: Right, that would be fabulous.

Maggie: That would be so fun.

Leah: Well, your work moves me deeply and I, just again hearing you speak about that single client, and I know there are many who experience that transformation.

Maggie: Thank you.

Leah: That, yeah, that moves me deeply. And I know that happens over and over in your work, and that is world changing work. But I do believe those most intimate relationships, first to ourselves, this is what the work is about, and then with the ones – our loved ones and the ones in our homes

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and our family. That absolutely touches every other area of life. And so if everybody gave themselves the gift of this work of a well loved relationship, a well loved self, a well loved other, that is world changing work.

Maggie: Thank you. I receive that, thank you.

Leah: Thank you so much for being here today, Maggie.

Maggie: My pleasure.

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So I want to thank Maggie again for being such a phenomenal guest and sharing so generously. I am so moved by her work, I think it's critically important and I had said that to her, well, probably during the episode, I know I did, and then also offline when we were done recording. Because I truly believe that that kind of change in an individual's life has great ripple effect.

And I also see the greater application, not greater as in it's superior, but how it reaches out on a micro level, this process of loving the world. And make no mistake, it requires muscle, and muscle requires practice, and practice requires vulnerability and falling down, and showing up, and getting back up again. And I think too that the thing that is hard for many of us is to risk being wrong in order to create something better. We just want to be safe and have it all turn out great, say the right thing, have everyone applaud, fix it. And that's just not the case.

And we set ourselves up for fragility, and failure, and avoidance, and confusion when we don't open ourselves up to the whole experience and what it really is.

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So this brings me to the part of the podcast where I want you to do more than just listen. I want you to lean in and really work with me, coach with me, don't just listen to this information and be entertained by it, although I hope you also will be uplifted by it. Then once you're uplifted, please take this information and act and implement it, use it to change your life, to transform your life and the world.

So what I want to focus on in today's Coach with Me is to build upon Maggie's approach, one I use with my clients as well in The Art School, of anticipating the obstacle. So I think there is a new framework. Well, it's always been there, and I think now it's clear to us where maybe a blind spot has been in anticipating the obstacle.

Because we can see in the world events today that one of the ways you might have difficulty achieving this step, completing and executing the step of anticipating the obstacle is if you don't see the obstacle. If the way your mind has been conditioned and is that it has built in this inherent bias, well, you just don't think the obstacle's there.

And really other people are saying, "Hey, this is a blind spot for you. Hey, this is an obstacle." And you're like, no, it's impossible for you to see it because the way that your brain has been conditioned is that it's not there. And maybe it really is serving you to not see it, which then just emphasizes and edifies the brain's mechanism so that it does not want to see it, because it might be hard to see it.

So I see this on a micro level with my clients, when there's signs to me that there is a blind spot is when they are very resistant to doing the work or to hearing something I have to say, and they get defensive. And I am all about, again, being challenged, and I am not at all proposing that my clients just do what I say all the time without thinking for themselves.

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My work is about drawing out the innate wisdom that exists within people, and then them using that to go out and create more wisdom in the world, by being wrong, by failing, but to trust themselves that they are hardy, resilient enough for that, that they are built for that work. So I never want someone to override their true wisdom because of something I have said.

And at the same time what I do ask of my clients is that they listen and they consider, and that they come to the work with an open mind. At the end of the day they still get to choose to think what they want to think, do what they want to do, believe what they want to believe.

And I also I want to present them with my perspective, what I am hearing them say. They might think they're thinking a certain way and then when they speak, I'm like, "You know what, I know you say you believe this, but let me tell you what I just heard you say. When I hold that up, what are your thoughts about that now?"

And sometimes when they are really defensive and resistant, that to me is a sign, because I've done this work personally myself too, that there's something there that's hard for us to look at. That resistance or an obliviousness are signs that we have somehow been conditioned, there's more of a fight to obliviousness and resistance than to something that is just really innocuous.

If something is innocuous, it has no charge for us. If it weren't true it had no charge for us, but when someone says something to us that deep down beneath our conscious level of thinking. Something in us is afraid that other person might be right. A lot of times the response is resistance, defensiveness, or just an overall confusion and obliviousness and/or overwhelm.

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So be onto yourself from a non-judgmental place, because we can't get anywhere if you stand in judgment of yourself. Your life doesn't move forward, the world doesn't move forward when you stand in harsh judgment of yourself. This is different than examining your consciousness, and examining your conscience. So you want to take shame out of the way and the self-judgment out of the way and not make it about you, but just make it about learning and gaining wisdom and growing.

So again, one way you can work on this is to be aware of do you have tendencies, when you put yourself in growth situations. And do you ask for help, you get a coach or you're in conversations where you want to grow or you intentionally put yourself in the way of being challenged in order to grow. And then you find yourself kind of in a stuck loop, you're not getting results, you're not moving forward? Go back and look at that situation and see, do you have experiences of resistance, defensiveness, obliviousness, confusion, overwhelm?

Because that just might be serving you so you don't have to take a hard look underneath of that thing that you're scared that you will be devastated by. So you have to hold this very safe place for yourself. And if you're doing this work with a coach you have to trust that you are in a safe place with that person. And at the same time, know that you are strong and that it won't devastate you.

And that dropping into that experience of what the thing you don't want to feel, or see, or experience, is absolutely the place to go to free yourself from an endless cycle of repeating a pattern that keeps you stuck, and keeps you from moving forward.

Another way, so after you are aware of these markers, of these emotions coming up, like resistance, the other thing you can do is to actively listen to

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others. To practice deep listening, to notice, again, when you feel like you're defensive or you want to rush to the answer, but to listen, to practice listening with an open heart and an open mind.

So one tool I wanted to share with you that is a powerful tool to this end is this practice. So if I can tell that a client is resistant or defensive, and I know I won't go anywhere by just pressing the issue. Because it's in a place where then it becomes a tug of war and they just press back harder, or the psyche presses back harder, doesn't want to have anything to do with that kind of conversation.

One way I ask the question is like this, okay, so let's say I'll give it to you that this thing isn't true. Now, let's just play a game, let's just play a game where we create this imaginary space, we put up these brackets. And just within this bracketed imaginary space, we're going to just consider, but what if it were true, we're going to play pretend. If it were true that I was thinking this, or feeling this, or that this is true about me, how could I see that playing out my life?

If I were just entertaining, as an imaginary possibility, many times just that layer of pulling back and allowing your brain to play with it as an imaginary possibility, creates so many epiphanies, one after another, because it's the ego is no longer feeling challenged. So that is something that you can play with.

So, one example, I use one example that is relatively innocuous, so let's say, I'll use a recent example, keeping client confidentiality of course. So I have a client who wants to make as much money as a coach as she made in corporate. And she killed it in corporate, she had an amazing high six figure salary, and she said money was so easy. But she said the work was like selling her soul and sucked her soul.

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And so she said that and I said, “Well, do you think that there might be any connection between this fact that you had an experience before in your life of making a lot of money, and making it very easily? And it’s also associated with work that you felt was soul sucking. Do you think there’s any possibility that your brain equates making a lot of money with selling your soul?” And she’s like, “Well, just in corporate.”

And I pressed a little bit more, “Do you think there’s any possibility though that that thought might be driving some of your current, like temporary and current lack of results in terms of making money as easily and as much money as a coach?” And she said, no, she didn’t think so. She couldn’t see any way that working as a coach and making money as a coach would be selling her soul.

And it’s at those points in the conversation too where I am going to trust the client and what they say. And at the same time also follow my coaching instinct that I do think that there is a critical block here, and that this is a key.

So I asked her, “Okay, let’s give it to you, like let’s just say that’s the case, there’s no relationship, so let’s just play the game of if it were true, if this was a different person. And let’s say a different person on the conscious level of thought was like, yeah, there is no way that making money as a coach is the same soul selling sucking work as making money in a corporate, no way that’s related.”

And then could it be possible for that other person, that maybe there is just that belief is beneath the surface and there’s something deeper in their psyche. That they are afraid of making money as a coach because it somehow will be selling their soul, is that somehow... Could you entertain the possibility that for that other person it could be happening that what’s

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driving the lack of financial results for them as a coach is a belief that they will take this soul giving, life affirming work? And they will turn it into soul selling, soul sucking work because of a monetary transaction.

That it would somehow, the money would somehow jeopardize or undermine the integrity of the soulful work of coaching?" So that's the way I presented it to her.

So I just share that specific example with you now, so hopefully that gives you some kind of framework for how to think about it yourself. And I think it also applies on another level you can think about it in terms of being racist versus antiracist.

And as you likely have seen now, being a racist does not just mean hatred or violence towards a person of a different skin color. But it is all these other things, these embedded belief systems and ways that we are privileged, or profit off the oppression, the systematic oppression of people of a different race. That that is also when we are living in a racist society, that that form of oppression, those belief systems, our brains are conditioned to that too.

And I think here's another place too where a lot of the work is recognizing the way that we flare up around that. If we can say to ourselves, a loving person, even an activist and we're like, "No, I'm not racist." And I think too, it's like these places where if we really want to change and we really want to make a meaningful change and be the change we wish to see in the world, that this question can be so helpful.

Because you put down the shame, which makes it all about you again, because this is not work about being selfish, and ask yourself, okay, let's say brain, okay, I'm not racist. But let's just pretend that somehow I am

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racist, and I don't even know it, I don't even realize it. Could it be possible that I'm somehow just oblivious to it? And if so, how might that be showing up?

And I think taking that framework into listening to conversations with other people, because again, I do think that's what's needed right now, are these places where we are not trying to eradicate the differences in one another in order to have peace. But it's this ability for us to expand the space we are able to hold and have difficult conversations without trying to make that premature piece, which actually just aborts the whole process, and undermines the whole process, and is just another form of oppression. So I do think it's a powerful question to ask yourself for these greater issues in the world and in our hearts and minds as well.

So, finally, I said at the beginning I would share a little bit about – one thing I'm being sharing a lot. And again, I don't want this to be about me, is I'm trying to walk the line of using my voice, and also be an example of something that I'm about to tell you about now. Because going into this, one of my fears, again, it's that old cycle of being afraid of conflict for the fear that I will hurt someone and do it wrong.

I realized when I did this process on myself of looking at where is my own resistance? Where, even when I think I'm not resistant to change, or that I am doing the work, what am I not seeing? Where are my blind spots? And one thing in particular arose, and it was this like one little thought of I'm a small human. In the scheme I think I have big impact for my clients. I have a big vision that I am building.

And it was this voice though saying, yeah, and you are early on in your journey and most people don't know you yet, and you are. That was the thought that came up when I did my own examination of conscience. You

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are a small human, I am a small human. And it seems so innocuous to think that, because what is behind that? But really what comes next is, well, then what I do doesn't matter and that is so dangerous. That's the great risk.

So instead I worked with that and why does that not ring true to me, and I'm a small human? And the opposite didn't seem right, I am a big human, I'm a grand human, I'm a big deal, I have a huge platform. That wasn't it. That wasn't it. I felt like there was a grain of truth, a small epiphany for me. And it was this, that just taking out the word 'small'. I am human. I am a human. I am a human that's alive right now. And not only is that sufficient for me to do what needs to be done.

It just means I'm exactly where I was meant to be, plopped down, incarnated, and at this lifetime as a human who is alive at this time right now. Those are my qualifications for wanting to do better, and also my humble example, because I know you also are not a small human, dear listener out there. You are a human and you're a human right now, you're a human who is alive right now. And that is no small thing.

So do with it, with that grand immense opportunity, do with it what you know you can and imagine what you can do that is beyond what you currently know.

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*. I am grateful for each and every one of you. I am grateful that this has become a global audience. I love it when you write in. I love it when you tell me that you are listening to the podcast while you make dinner, while you're out for a run, while you're painting in your studio. That means the world to me.

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And if this message resonates with you and if it lands, and if it's useful, and you are wanting to spread the work and be a human alive now and an agent for creative revolution from a place of love and true change, truly doing the work. And you have allies and friends, cohort that you want to share this with I would so appreciate you sharing.

And as always, your reviews on iTunes mean so much to me. It helps me reach more people and it is also that additional element of human connection that makes a great difference for me when I create this, so thank you.

So to close the podcast today I want to bring you back to Maggie's – what's something she's so amazing at - she is so amazing at helping her clients anticipate the obstacle. So for you, think about the vision you have for your life, for the world on many levels. And yes, go to that place where it is alive and it is energized, and high vibing, and juicy, and so good, and so real. And also go to the place where it's also real life, it's human, it's being alive, it's messy. Go to the place where there are obstacles, and see who you want to be as you move through those obstacles.

Anticipate the obstacle, maybe that you don't think you are equipped to encounter, the obstacle which my brain was saying, this challenge, you're just a small human. Instead, how do you want to think of yourself as you move through immense challenge and difficulty, how strong can you be? How ennobled can you be? The hero isn't always winning; it's that triumph of the human spirit. So who do you want to be, through truly the hardest times? And how will you move through those obstacles?

Plan for that beautiful vision that we're all creating together and that you are creating in your own life, plan to win and cross that finish line, stand on that podium in your own life. And also what is your vision for the world?

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Let's all together anticipate the obstacles, get ourselves ready and know we can move through it, and plan to win. I love you guys so much. Thank you for being here. And I will talk with you next time.