

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Leah Badertscher**

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

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

The past few weeks, I've wanted to do a better job of listening. I've always loved listening. I love deep listening. I love being the recipient on the other end of deep listening, and I love being a deep listener. I also love learning from others who are deep listeners. I find a lot of solace in it. I find healing. I find people who live their lives as deep listeners often have things to say that are so evident, but we just hadn't found the words to wrap around it before. And then, once it is, for all of us, that truth is opened and our lives are illuminated.

So, the past few weeks in particular, I have turned, as I often do in times both that I'm feeling inspired and also feeling under the weight of things. I've turned to great thinkers, poets, philosophers, artists that I greatly admire and respect because they are both deep listeners and they've lived deeply and they've acted deeply.

So, today, what I want to share with you is, from those deep dives, just a few things that I have brought back. There is a sea that we could all dive into. But, for today's episode, so that we all have space for more listening, I just want to share a few of the things that have surfaced and have illuminated so much for me and I hope will do the same for you.

And then, at the end as well, I'm going to do something a little bit different for Coach with Me and share with you an exercise that helps me both to position myself in the deep listening mode, and also to integrate and be changed by what I've heard. And that is also a great restorative practice for when you have been taking in so much.

So, I hope you will listen in today, listen deeply, not just to my words, but to the words that I'm wanting to amplify today and I hope also that this practice meets you where you are.

You are listening to *The Art School Podcast*, a show for artists and creatives who want to become the next greatest version of themselves.

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

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

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, my dear listeners. And welcome back. And welcome to those of you who are joining for the first time. More than ever, I am grateful for this community, grateful knowing you're there, grateful when I receive messages from you, grateful when some of you reach out and set up discovery consults or I get to work with you in The Art School.

I'm continuing to offer free group coaching calls at this time as well as offering the free summer workshop series for my Art School enrollees and for those who have already opted into my mastermind that begins in August. So, they too are eligible to join the free group calls.

But then, so are you. You don't have to purchase anything. You're not obligated to anything. You can share the link with anyone. It's something I can do at this time, you know, doing the best with what I can, with where I am, and then also learning and doing better all the time too. And I know that's where many of you are.

And I have to say, doing this in community is so valuable, so important. And something that seems as simple as, for instance today for the summer workshop series, we have one of our workshops that is our virtual collective studio date. So, we have 90 minutes where we get together.

I open. I have a way of opening, setting the space, inviting everyone in, saying some words, inviting everybody to share what they're going to be focused on during that time in the chat. And then, collectively, in our own respective geographical spheres but in this collective virtual space, we go to work, like immersed in what is both sacred and essential to us.

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

Ideally, in an ideal world, that would be obvious and redundant. And it's okay for right now that that's where we are, is to remind ourselves and to focus ourselves and to create a space for giving our precious time and attention to that which is sacred and essential.

And I will be honest. Today, I needed that 90 minutes to just breathe and write slowly and let my soul catch up to me after the past few weeks. And also, it helped me clear my mind about what I wanted to say and share with you today.

I've been learning so much in the past few weeks about white supremacy, about what it truly means to be anti-racist and what it truly means to be an ally. And an ally is not a noun, but it needs to be a verb. And I know there are so many resources out there. and I'm not going to inundate you because I know you're as capable of searching Google as I am.

I do want to share with you a few things, and people, who have really already opened my mind and already transforming the way I'm thinking and doing things in case you haven't encountered them before.

So, one is, like, on the front of being a coach and a business owner and an entrepreneur, I want to learn more and do everything I can be doing there on that front. I do believe that business has the potential, and for me, I want it to be a force for good.

And so, what helped me so much last week, on that front, was I attended this townhall about reimagining small business. It was a townhall to listen and commit to building equitable anti-racist organizations. There is still a Facebook live replay available. I learned about it because I follow and am a fan of both Susan Hyatt and Rachel Rodgers. And they had a panel of amazing panelists there; everyone excellent in their own regard and kind of blew me away in their own regard.

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

And so, if you are a small business owner, an entrepreneur, and also if you're not and you just want to learn and transform yourself from people who are smart, who are educated, who are thinking about this, are doing the work themselves, it's definitely worth checking out. I highly recommend it.

One of my greatest takeaways from that was Rachel Rodgers quoted Ijoma Oluo who said this past week, "Be wary of anything that allows you to do something that isn't actually felt by the people of color." And Rachel then paraphrased this as saying, "If you want to take an action as an ally, if you want to be the verb of an ally, then ask yourself when you're doing something, can Black people feel this effort?" That way, you can know what you're doing matters and you're in a place that matters and it's not performative and not just to assuage some guilt or to check a box.

But I repeat that. "Be wary of anything that allows you to do something that isn't actually felt by the people of color. Can Black people feel this effort?" So, I thought that was one of many amazing takeaways from that townhall.

The other thing that I wanted to share as, like, I have been thinking and learning and was thinking about, you know, intuitively, I felt like I wanted this podcast to be about listening. And so, I thought, well who are some incredible Black artists, artists of color, writers of color, thinkers that have transformed the way I think and what have they said about listening?

So, two came to mind. Well, many came to mind. And I can't share everything I learned, but I want to share, one was this quote from Toni Morrison that was from her Nobel lecture in '93.

She wrote, "Be it grand or slender, be it burrowing, blasting, or refusing to sanctify, whether it laughs out loud or is a cry without an alphabet, the choice word, the chosen silence, unmolested language surges toward knowledge, not its destruction. But who does not know of literature banned

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

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

because it is interrogative, discredited because it is critical, erased because it is alternate? And how many are outraged by the thought of a self-ravaged tongue?”

I can greatly appreciate another human’s words and their experience. But I know I can’t appropriate it. and it doesn’t even feel right, like it doesn’t do it justice, for me to read the quote. But I did want to share those words because I hope it then inspires you to go to YouTube because the audio, her speaking, the audio of that Nobel lecture is available.

It also led me to think about how it’s the case that we can read and listen and we can make an effort to diversify what we read and listen to. And we can read and listen broadly. But if we are not also thinking and acting and doing differently because of what we have read and listened to, if the effect that we have on the world is not transformed then that’s just another example of what’s been called a colonization of the experience of people different than us, rather than truly taking it in and allowing it to do the work of integrating and of changing.

And it comes back to that question that I thought Rachel Rodgers so eloquently posed of, “Can people feel this effort?” So, those were just some thoughts that had from this week. And it was also a theme that became clear as I was reading, was when I went to the great thinkers, the poets, the writers, the artists that I admired, like Toni Morrison and Audre Lorde was, right away, you don’t get too far into reading what they wrote or listening to what they said before it’s clear that, to them, the listening has to follow into then language, and the language has to follow then into action.

Audre Lorde has these words to offer, “My silences have not protected me. Your silence will not protect you.” And that was from an article entitled – and I felt like the title of this article was poetry and wisdom and activism in itself – The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action. And it was an article from 1984.

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

And also, on the site [blackpast.org](http://blackpast.org), there is the transcript of a presentation, a keynote presentation Audre Lorde gave in 1981, June 1981 at the National Women's Studies Association conference. So, you can find the full presentation transcript of it there. But the title of that was The Uses of Anger, Women Responding to Racism.

And that is an article I would highly recommend seeking out. Again, it was written in 1981 and it could have been written yesterday. So, that one, again, is a great place to go.

Another place that I've been looking is also to contemporary places and places where looking for artists and speakers and poets and writers, voices who I might not have encountered otherwise. And one of my Art School veterans, Art School alums sent me a message on Instagram and said, "Hey, here's someone I think you should definitely check out."

So, his name is Josiah Golson and he is a former lawyer turned artist. He is Black. He is passionate about taking civic conversations and then using art to have civic conversations. And some of what he has written and described about some of his frustrations, coming from law school, or maybe just that they were limitations, is that there's a certain sort of discourse we can have in townhall-like spaces. And yet, the different medium affects us differently. And somehow, we're able to have different conversations, approach the conversation differently, see things differently, have a different influence and impact on people.

So, I highly recommend checking him out. He also has this great exercise which a lot of my Art School community has been doing where he takes the black square and then he's got this magic-making exercise. It's all on IG with it. I won't spoil it for you, but I highly recommend you go and not only watch that, but do that and follow him.

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

Another voice that I have loved the introduction to is @andreaenaej Jay. So, she has, on her Instagram profile, she prefers pronouns she and they. And she also writes that she does not like to be pigeonholed as to what she does. But if I had to sum up for my audience here, she is an artist in every degree, a practical philosopher, a force of nature, and an activist, and a coach activist.

And reading her words, she's also a woman that thinks deeply and writes from that space. So, before we move into the Coach with Me for today's episode, I wanted to share something that was posted on her Instagram last week at the end of the week that I found so powerful.

So, she writes, "At the end of this week, where many have decided to engage in all forms of protest and amplify the work, words and experiences of black people, may we take stock what has been both gained and lost, learned and unlearned, transformed and maintained. May we be with the consequences of our decisions this week; the positive, the negative, and the in between. May we reorient ourselves around the question, what now, as we head into a new week, month, year, and world?"

I know many of you listening are asking yourself that question, what now? And I know you are wanting to do it from the most ennobled place. And I know the kind of impact that you want to have in the world. I know the kind of life that you want to live and the kind of transformation that you want to be a part of.

And so, this is why I'm offering this particular Coach with Me segment this week. So, this is the part of the podcast where I do want you to do more than just listen. I want you to lean in and really work with me, Coach with Me, take this information and allow yourself to be transformed by it so that what you do has a transformative effect on the world.



## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

So, let me preface this by saying this is not something to listen to while you are driving or operating heavy machinery. Do this when you can be in a safe space, home, comfortable, and lie down on the floor and you're not worried about, you know, dozing off.

This is something that I used to do at the end of every yoga class I taught, every mind-body class or workshop that I taught, either for a group or for private clients. It's also something my children request that I do almost every night. They call it, "The yoga thing..." because that's what they've been calling it since they were like two or three and could talk.

So, what it is, is just a guided relaxation. And I think our bodies can help us move into a place out of defense mode and out of this hypervigilant tense mode and into a place where we can really open our hearts, open our minds, and at the same time receive and also be restored and held. We can release the fear. We can open our hearts, and also feel the support of the Earth rising up to support us at every square inch.

So, what I would like you to do for this is, again, find a quiet and safe place where you won't be disturbed for at least 20 minutes; longer if you can. And I want you to lie down, preferably on a mat or on a blanket on the floor. Lie down on your back and stretch out, arms at your side, legs apart. And I want you to take a nice deep inhale through your nose and a long exhale. And another nice deep inhale, and an exhale. Another nice deep inhale, draw the breath in deep this time. Hold it at the top. A nice deep inhale, hold it at the top.

On the exhale, release, let it go, close your eyes. One more nice deep inhale, eyes closed now. Draw it in. And then exhale. Let everything go. Let your chin drop. Let your jaw be slack. Soften the small muscles around your eyes and across the bridge of your nose. Let your forehead be smooth and soft.

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

Take another nice deep inhale, and exhale, release. Continue to breathe, inhaling and exhaling. And with each consecutive exhale, imagine your bones growing heavier and heavier and sinking more deeply into the floor. Feel the weight at the back of your heels sink into the floor, the back of your knees, your hips. Let your lower back release. Let your ribs settle. Take another nice deep inhale, and exhale. Release any tension in your heart.

Let your shoulder blades settle into the floor. Let your shoulder blades drop down. Let your shoulders drop down away from your ears and the sides of your neck. Gently lengthen. Take a nice deep inhale. Notice any tension in your throat and exhale, let it go. Bring your awareness to the area behind your forehead. Notice if there's any tension there. and just invite it to soften and release and open.

Bring your awareness and your attention to your eyes. Notice that even though your eyes are closed, are they still clenched and squinting as if you're hyper-focusing at a computer screen or a problem that you're trying to figure out?

And if so, again, just inhale and exhale. Soften your gaze with your eyes closed. Soften your inner gaze. Let it go wide. Let it be diffuse. Imagine your gaze expanding to 180 degrees and then open your focus as if you could take in 360 degrees in all directions, like a sphere.

Take another nice deep inhale, and exhale, scanning the length of your body for any pockets of tension, not making any of that a problem, but just noticing, take a nice deep inhale, and exhale. See if you can allow it to soften and release.

Again, bring your attention to your heart. Take a nice deep inhale, and then exhale, open, soften your heart, and let it melt into the floor. Bring your awareness to the entirety of your legs, your lower half. Notice any tension

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

there. Take a nice deep inhale, and on your exhale, let the legs go. Let your entire lower half drop and sink more deeply into the floor.

Bring your awareness to your arms. Let them also become heavy like rocks and sink into the floor. Meanwhile, all the soft tissue of your body, the muscles, the ligaments, the fascia, let it warm and soften, letting any tension release.

With each exhale, releasing tension, letting the bones grow heavier and heavier, releasing and shedding any weight that is not yours, letting the heart open and grow more expansive, letting the mind open and spirit open and widen and grow more expansive. And with each exhale, as you allow your body to rest deeply, allowing yourself to not hold yourself up anymore, to not do the work in your lower back of holding yourself up, to not make your shoulders rise up to your ears to hold yourself up, noticing all of the places in your body where you may have been clenching and holding onto so much tension, trying to hold so many things up and together.

Take a nice deep inhale and exhale. Let that go. And let the body sink and drop more deeply into the floor, allowing it to be embraced, supported by the floor, allowing your body to sink deeply at every square inch, deep into the Earth, and then feeling the Earth rise up to support you at every square inch, bringing your awareness to the entire backside of your body, feeling all of the spaces where the Earth rises up to support you.

And where you feel those spaces, see if you can soften and drop more deeply, more heavily into that embrace and support of the Earth. And notice how that is always available to you. At any time, you are held and supported. You can be embraced in this way. You can stay in this space, continuing to inhale and exhale, continuing to sink deeply into the Earth and allowing the Earth to rise up and support you at every square inch.

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

You can continue to scan your body for tension and then breathe into it, and exhale, and release. You can scan your mind. Stay here for as long as you like. And then, at the end, notice the crown of your head and imagine someone is gently but very firmly pressing down into the soft spot in the crown of your head. Imagine that spot pressing down.

Imagine the tension there. Inhale, and then pressing hard, and then exhale there, release, and the tension is gone. And light and love, new energy pours through your body, coursing through your body, restoring every cell so that your entire being is restored and rejuvenated by this practice. Allow yourself to take this deep rest in at every level and allow it to support you now and as you go throughout your day and throughout your week.

Thank you so much for listening to another episode of *The Art School Podcast*.

If you've enjoyed this podcast, if it's been useful for you, the best thing you can do to spread the word is to share it. Share it with friends, share it with colleagues. You can also go to iTunes and leave a review. That helps me bring this work to more people and I truly, truly appreciate it.

I appreciate you listening. I appreciate you sharing. And I am so grateful when you take the time out of your busy lives to leave a review and leave a comment. So, thank you. And, when you're ready to take this work deeper, sign up for my mailing list so that you're sure not to miss out on any of the free group coaching calls we do.

And there's going to be a lot of amazing opportunities for that coming up. So, be sure to be on the list. Also, for those of you that want more advanced attention and more personalized attention and really want to create a momentum in your life and carve out a place where you know you're dedicating the best of your spirit, intellect, the contribution you have

## Ep #84: Now Is the Time to Listen Deeply

here to what is truly sacred and essential to you, be sure to check out The Art School and the mastermind.

The mastermind is open for applications and The Art School is open for enrollment. And for qualifying applicants for the mastermind and for those who enroll in The Art School, what's also included is the summer workshop series. And this is a way where you can be supported throughout this summer and it nurtures you. It is like that Earth rising up to support you, your sacred and essential priorities and work in the world, your creative flourishing at every square inch so that you feel rested and restored and so that you can rise, create, live, and contribute in the way that you know you are meant to.

To close, I wanted to share two more thoughts from both Toni Morrison and also Audre Lorde. Toni Morrison wrote, when asked what her thoughts were about an artist's task in troubled times, "There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear."

Audre Lorde in her book of essays, *A Burst of Light and Other Essays*, "I am listening to what fear teaches. I will never be gone. I am a scar, a report from the frontlines, a talisman, a resurrection, a rough place on the chin of complacency."

So, my dear listeners, what are you listening to these days? How will you listen? How will you be changed by it? How will you change what you do because of it? And how will you answer that question, what now? Have a beautiful week, everyone. Thank you so much for being here and I'll talk to you next time.