

# EEP 158 Lindsay Lashell A Mark...vist Blends Purpose and Profit

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

marketing, empathy, work, talk, nonprofits, people, b corp, clients, women, offer, social media, entrepreneurs, corpse, opportunity, sliding scale, love, met, business, activist, wrote

## SPEAKERS

Lindsay Lashell, Maria Ross

### Lindsay Lashell 00:01

I can help the people who are here to fight that battle. But that is not the best use of me, right? Something like the school shootings is another thing that's like really upsetting when it happens. And I am comforted by knowing that like, I know what my battle is. It's not gun control. It's not abortion access. My battle is entrepreneurship, opportunity and equity. And that's what I'm here to do. And I think if you figure out what it is that you are here for, there's a business model there, there's a business model, that part is not the hard part.

### Maria Ross 00:33

Welcome to the empathy edge podcast the show that proves why cash flow, creativity and compassion are not mutually exclusive. I'm your host, Maria Ross. I'm a speaker, author, mom, facilitator and empathy advocate. And here you'll meet trailblazing leaders and executives, authors and experts who embrace empathy to achieve radical success. We discuss all facets of empathy from trends and research to the future of work, to how to heal societal divisions and collaborate more effectively. Our goal is to redefine success and prove that empathy isn't just good for society, it's great for business. Want to save the world and build a healthy, profitable business? You can you can have impact No matter your work. My guest today, Lindsey le shell founder of open lines marketing, talks about her evolution into becoming a marketing activist and devoting her marketing skills to help women queer or bipoc entrepreneurs, nonprofits, B corpse and other purpose driven organizations increase their opportunity through marketing strategy. We talked about everything purpose and profit. So you're in for a treat. What a marketing activist is how impact organizations can better leverage marketing to achieve their goals, where folks go wrong when it comes to leveraging social media, and the marketing lies that detract all of us for profit and nonprofit from achieving our goals. Lindsay explains her buyers journey framework, and how it operationalizes empathy into your business model and marketing. We talk about B corpse and how any business that wants to make a difference can become one, and she has stellar advice for anyone longing to marry their purpose, profit or paycheck. You'll leave today's conversation inspired and activated to do more good with your work. No matter how large your organization or your

skill set. Take a listen. A big hello to you, Lindsay. Today joining us on the empathy edge Podcast. I'm so glad we're reconnecting and having this conversation. Thanks, Ray. I'm so excited to be here. So you and I met years ago at a wonderful Women's Conference in Northern California, I believe it was called world changer women, women, world changing women and you are a world changing woman. And I'm so glad we got the chance to meet there and stay in touch. Talk to us a little bit about your work and specifically what marketing activism is.

**Lindsay Lashell 03:12**

Yeah, do you know it was like such a glorious day was the day that I realized that my experience and my skills could be aligned with the purposeful path that I was looking for. It was just it was just magical, because I had been. I mean, I'll be honest, I say this all the time. Like I don't actually care about marketing at all. Like that is not my thing. My thing is helping people get what they need from their organizations. And marketing happens to be the skill set that I've got. So the activism to me is that I focus on making businesses stronger for women, bipoc Queer entrepreneurs, for nonprofits and be corpse and purpose driven organizations. It's like, if by my by my values, if your success makes the world a better place, then I want to help you. That's my activism. So you know, if you are an I have a handful of clients that are straight white men, but they either run nonprofits or social enterprises or something else, right. On the other side, if you're a black woman, and one of the things I say all the time is like as long as you're not selling guns or drilling for oil, I don't care how you make yourself Rich and I want to help. And so that's how I That's how my activism,

**Maria Ross 04:37**

I love it. Well, I've always said throughout my whole career in marketing and branding, that if we could only use marketing for good rather than evil, how world changing that would be. Absolutely. You know, you and I are so aligned in that we look at marketing, not as this schlocky, you know, I always tell people marketing is not about lying to people. It's about elevating the truth of your story. So the Need what you've got can find you. And you can actually create a sustainable business where you can do more good in the world. Yes. And so again, those are the those are the clients, I think both of us have that kinship of those are the clients were drawn to. And I will say, even when I work with my high tech clients, if they have a deeper mission and a deeper purpose, to leverage their technology to make the world better, I want to work with them. Right? Absolutely. So I love this so much. And I love that you, you know, I don't know if you coined the term, but it's the first place I ever heard it was being a marketing activist, because I think it really gets to that idea of leveraging marketing as a communication tool. Yeah.

**Lindsay Lashell 05:41**

Yeah, it is. I mean, it's super intentional. I made it up as far as I know, I don't I have never met another marketing teams. But for me, yeah. But for me, it really is, you know, it's funny, because I still do have clients, especially when I work with like an accelerator, where the businesses, the entrepreneurs I'm working with, didn't necessarily opt to work with me, right, because I'm like writing them or a curriculum or whatever. Like, I definitely have to do a little bit of a karmic balancing soul cleansing exercise, first to get everybody on board with the idea that marketing in and of itself is not bad. That that is that you know, anything can be used for good or bad, exactly getting and if your business is good. And your

marketing deserves to be good, and you shouldn't get too caught up in the garbage that we've all experienced, and the exploitation and you know, ways

**Maria Ross 06:32**

I mean, this is why this is why people are sick of advertising and marketing is because there's so much bad stuff out there and right, because it's they're spraying the wall, hoping to hit the right people. And I do love like you I love working with nonprofits and social impact organizations to Leverage Marketing to amplify their message, because they often they have such good intentions, but they don't have that skill set all the time. So, so let's talk a little bit about the framework you use, because your company open lines, has a unique method for operationalizing empathy in marketing. And I know again, you and I are very aligned on the fact that marketing begins with empathy for your, for your customer, for your prospect for the person you're trying to serve, right? Not the person you're trying to get money from. So talk about how the framework helps your clients operationalize empathy.

**Lindsay Lashell 07:27**

Yeah, it's the man, when I figured out this thing, I got so excited. Like, in so many different marketing jobs I had had, the Mo was like, Yeah, you do some persona work fine, then you put together the campaign, and you like, take the client's money, and you're like, Oh, I hope the phone rings have a good time. And when I started my own marketing agency, that was just not good enough for me, like I needed to know that the work we were doing was really well informed, and that it was gonna be held accountable for being effective. Like, those were the two things I was like, if we can't get the results, we promise you should take your money somewhere else, right? Like, I don't want it. And so. So that was where the framework started, where I started to develop this framework. And I mean, the basically, the premise of it is, if we look at the buyers journey, I break it down into five distinct phases, right? Part one is what we call the problem stage. And that's like pre action, right? There's like something in the back of my head says, I'm going to need a solution for some problem someday, but I'm not taking action on it yet. Right? Then you have like a triggering event that puts you into the research stage, which is when you are really starting to gather all your options, right? The way I talk about research stages, like you are walking through the store, picking up things off the rack that you are then going to try on, right? If you and the trying them on, that's the planning stage, that's when you're like going through each thing and saying like, what's at stake? Is this appropriate? Can I afford it? Do I like the way it fits? Like whatever, right? Those are really the questions in the planning stage. And then you get to a decision which gets you to solution, right? And I am as a marketer, anybody who says that is not marketing, communications is missing opportunities, right? Like how you talk to your clients and your customers is a marketing opportunity and how you leverage them in Phase Five, which is the recommendation stage can be everything for how effective your message is, for how well your your product is received, right, whatever it is. And so so the thing that's amazing about this is when you look at the really like the user experience through those steps, it turns out that there's like specific marketing channels that correlate with those experiences. So nobody, right it's like the solution stage is almost never on Your social media. So whatever people care about at the solution stage doesn't have to show up in your social media at all. And so now we can start to get what questions? Are they asking when they're on your social media? And just focus on answering those, you don't have to answer every question everywhere, know where they are when they are like, so it's an emotional journey. But then it's also like a digital or

physical journey. And so once you, once you map those two things together, it tells you pretty clearly what you need to say, and where you need to say it. And that simplifies things quite a lot.

**Maria Ross** 10:31

And it's different for every company, because I know when I worked in enterprise sales, that, you know, we would always try to talk to the sales teams about that, like you can't propose on the first date. Right, you're not going to ask for the sale at that first meeting. Now there's, there's things you have to do. And also you're not going to necessarily offer a demo, or reveal references, until they get to a certain phase of the journey, where that's applicable. So there's even like marketing assets that go within each phase of the journey. And it's sort of like, you know, are you are you introducing them to mom and dad on the first date? Yeah, exactly. They will run it's too much, right? In a b2b context,

**Lindsay Lashell** 11:12

it's even more interesting, because lots of times the conversion point is telling your boss about the opportunity. Yes,

**Maria Ross** 11:20

it's not even you, you're just the researcher.

**Lindsay Lashell** 11:23

Right. And so you understand that journey when you like, dig in, and really empathize with that person, what makes them tick in their job, like, I am that person. I know. It's so cheesy, and I don't care, but like b2b, b2c, individual humans,

**Maria Ross** 11:39

yeah. And we're selling to humans

**Lindsay Lashell** 11:42

are patient. And so we don't care. Like when my clients want to tell me that their customers are the name of a company or a job title or something like that, like we have a lot of work to do. It is a human person with their own fears, and wants, and hobbies, and stresses, and we got to meet them there. And so that's like that journey map is what I call it is like going through and in their own words, describing their experience of like where you're at at each. Absolutely. I

**Maria Ross** 12:12

love that you said that, because that's actually in a workshop I've been offering around how to create an empathetic brand, is learning how to ask an echo back. Because we have the way we fall in love with describing our product or service. And it might there might be a place for that. Because we might be creating a new category, we need to introduce new language. But are you talking to your customers and finding out how they describe what you do to their peers? Yeah, that's the language we should be using. So that's when you get that marketing and advertising where people read it and go, Oh, my gosh, they're inside my head. Yes, that's right. I love it. Okay, so how, you know, given all of that, talk to, you know, help us make that business case of how does leveraging empathy in that process, make your marketing more efficient?

**Lindsay Lashell** 13:01

Do you know what it's exactly what you said about people who are like spreading the walls trying to collect it? Right? Really, mediocre marketing costs a lot of money, because you're like, you don't know who you're talking to, and you don't know what you're offering. And so you got to iterate on 1000 1000 different offers and taglines and like all this kind of stuff. And it's just wasteful. It's easy when you have a big budget to like, get results, like that's 100% of the time, if you have enough money, you can get your customers and you can have a completely garbage product, right? Like, brilliant examples of that in the world. Unfortunately, I'm sorry to say yeah, but let's be honest about it, like the people that I'm trying to help. We don't have time and money to waste. That's opposite of what's happening. We need our shit to be more efficient, we need better. And so that's where that empathy focuses your range. And it's, you know, and it's so funny, because it's an experience that so many of my clients have, where they're like, Well, I have this persona, and I have this persona. And I have this persona, and I start to talk about, like, what is your offer for them? Why are they accepting it? And it's like, well, they would accept it, except for there's this one objection, or it's not a good fit because of this. And it's like, not your people, not your people. And so we just like start to narrow it down and narrow it down until we have such a clear picture. And this is the thing that I do that really ends up happening a lot too is that like, I can help my clients confidently, no, who is not their client, who is not their customer who they don't even have to try to sell to, I can give them permission to be like you're not for them. Just don't even try don't worry about it. It's a waste of time and money, like so. And so that's really the that's really where it gets efficient because when you're only talking to the right people, right? Use language that really resonates really deeply. You can use channels and really clever ways and when you're doing winging it right? Then it cuts out all the noise. You just don't have to do all kinds of other garbage.

**Maria Ross** 15:06

Well, speaking of figuring out which channels to use, I know you have very strong opinions about social media. And they are very aligned with my opinions. So I would like you to talk a little bit about the, the myth we've all bought into. Because we forget there was a world of commerce before social media existed. And companies were built and made money and served customers. Talk to us about the mistakes you see, especially like you're saying, These people where the resources are precious, like whether it's a woman entrepreneur, or small business or a nonprofit, every dollar every hour counts. That's right. So where are they you know, where are they going wrong with trying to leverage social media to amplify their message?

**Lindsay Lashell** 15:51

Yeah, do you know? So my, there's a couple of different ways that this plays out, right? For me, there's like Rule number one is, why are you doing this thing? Like what is the specific action that you are trying to generate? What is the specific business case for why this has to happen? And that could be social media, it could be a newsletter, whatever. But what is this supposed to accomplish? And is it doing that? Yeah, it's not doing that stop, like, or change tack or something, right? We again, we don't have time to waste. And so that so it's like, let's be honest about the fact that I like Sorry, but like I this message, often, I have to direct specifically to a nonprofit Ed, because there's a lot of shoulds. There's a lot of shoulds. I feel like we have to so we should we're going to the board, no

**Maria Ross** 16:49

one else is doing it.

**Lindsay Lashell** 16:50

All this Yeah, wise, those are all lies. That's all fiction, we don't have to believe it. And so so let's take a step back and really think very deeply about where are our people interested in hearing from us? And what do what are they interested in specifically, what is the offer that we are making to them, that they care about? And if those things are not connecting, be honest about it, and GTFO. And so, social media especially, is, I think it's really difficult because it used to be good. It used to be a cost effective way to expand your audience. Because you had your people and your people would engage with your stuff, your people would see your stuff, and they would engage with your stuff. And then there are people would see your stuff, and they would engage with it. And you could very organically and efficiently grow your audience? Well, guess what? Step one in that chain is broken. Now Facebook has like a five in 10,000 Organic view rate, right? Twitter is half of that, and Instagram is even less. So it's like, how many? How many followers do you have to have in order to get even 100 people to see your stuff? And of the 100? who see it? How compelling does it have to be to get them to engage with it? Like it's just, it's a losing battle, right? Because Facebook and Google specifically, like, These guys make money 500 bucks a time at from small businesses all over the world. And they just do that. So it's like to you or me, or like the pizza guy around the corner, like 500 bucks a month feels like an amount that I should be spending on my advertising and that it's a reasonable you know what I mean? Like it's a reasonable, because it's expensive, so you don't think that much about it. And so that's what they're doing. They're basically saying, you can't have this for free anymore, because we'd rather have your 500 bucks a month. And if people are doing that, that, you know, they now can do whatever they want. Right? So yeah, it just to me, we just need to stop shitting on ourselves, we just need to like, go back and say for real? What's it for? And is it? Is this a reasonable like investment? Is it a good use of our time to try to get that,

**Maria Ross** 19:10

and I always try to think about it too, in terms of, you know, if you are honest with yourself, and you're using social media to just raise awareness and have a presence and be part of the conversation, you're cool, but know that and invest accordingly. And, you know, like as someone who is going to be investing in some social media advertising campaigns, my goal is to get those people on my email list. And then I don't have to rely on social media anymore, then they're actually part of my community. And I'm not renting the space, I'm owning the space, right for as long as I am lucky enough to have them as I continue to offer value. That's right, but so it's just having your eyes open. When you make those investments. And you have a class for folks, the social media solution how to walk away from channels you don't like without sacrificing opportunity, and I think that's talking about asking and echoing back, that's always what I hear is like, well, I don't want to sacrifice the opportunity, I don't want FOMO I don't want to miss out,

**Lindsay Lashell** 20:10

you know, like, I have to be there. I feel like I have to be there. And the worst part of it is is like, especially as a like solo or small business, right, you've got limited resources. So your options are invest those resources in a channel, that is not going to pay you back. Yeah. Don't invest in that



channel, and then feel like crap about it. Right? Because either because you're not showing up as the genius that you are, or because because it's, you know, like, for, it's just not representing you? Well, because you as, especially for a woman business owner, like feel like you should, and you're not, you put this extra pressure. And so it's like it's lose lose. So for me, once I realized, sort of the way that social media can be, frankly, more of a landing page than a Yes, way billboard. Right. Yeah. And that I mean, spoiler alert, that's what the course is about, right? It's like, like, how to think through the process of like, what is your Instagram need to be? If all it's doing is validating people who are coming, they're looking for you. If you go to open, if you go to open lines, marketing, Instagram, literally the most recent posts says Find us on LinkedIn.

**Maria Ross** 21:29

Yeah, that's that's your, that's your place. That's where you engage. And I want to add to because in case folks don't listen all the way through you are, we are going to, in the show notes, have a special coupon code for listeners who want to check out that course of yours for free. So this isn't about trying to sell people on this, you are really just trying to get this message out there to help entrepreneurs, small businesses, social impact organizations, nonprofits, stop wasting their precious resources and be more successful. So we will have that coupon code in the show notes for folks that are interested in checking out that short and juicy class that you are offering. So I want to just ask, you know, with your own experience, as a woman entrepreneur, I believe you had a B Corp before or other agency a B Corp as well. Can you talk a little bit about, you know, that landscape of being a woman entrepreneur and trying to have social impact as a B Corp? And, you know, trying to make money while serving your purpose? What are some of the lessons learned that you have to share with people about that?

**Lindsay Lashell** 22:39

Yeah, it's got, you know, I, I guess the the first and like, overarching, like idea that I would want to get across is just that, like, you absolutely do not have to choose between purpose and profit, like, Absolutely do not. The B Corp movement is, it's really special to me, I have a great community of other women entrepreneurs there. And, you know, when we got so I started my eight, my marketing agency, it was the first business I started in this in this industry. And that was in 2015. And we got our first B Corp certification in late 2019 2018 2018. And it was such a great exercise, because it was really just like, ticking boxes of like, proving that we are who we say we are, right, we were already I was already in a place where I was like, we want to work with purpose driven businesses, we want to work with nonprofits and and that's all you know, that's all great. And then when I transitioned from the from the agency into more of a teaching coaching, advising role as I am with the framework, then the it just got even easier, because the lot the downstream impact, right? It's just it's a simpler, it's a simpler model. And the way that the community and the assessments work is it's very, it adjusts to your business model. Everybody's evaluated based on whether or not they have a supply chain, whether or not they have physical space, like all these sorts of things. But the bottom line is that, you know, B Corp is working really hard to make sure that it's available to everybody that this was like this is not an exclusive, it's not elite it is like should be thinking about the, you know, carbon footprints of our businesses, right, you know, like, whatever that is. And so we should be forced to think through the impact of our work on our local community and on our global community and all the things so I think, yeah, I mean, like I said, like, the very first thing I said was like, the day that I realized that like, the things I wanted to do at work and the things that were impactful could be the same thing was just

amazing. And so I think. And so that's the thing is like, even if you're just, you know, selling office supplies, sell renewables and sell them to purpose driven businesses. And now you're you know what I mean? Like, there's nothing hard about taking a regular business model and making a purpose driven business business model. And I think this is one of the things that I'm really excited for him the next steps of this evolution is watching the nonprofit as like nonprofits are starting to be more revenue minded. And my sincerest hope is that that leads them towards more efficient business practices, and, frankly, more ethical business practices. Because I think that's the philanthropy has a lot of legacy stuff that they need to outgrow right, to evolve out of, and I think the B Corp movement is a good a good model for how to do that.

**Maria Ross** 25:55

And we probably should have said this earlier in case there is anyone unfamiliar with the B Corp classification. Can you just give us a quick? Yeah, Intro to that?

**Lindsay Lashell** 26:04

Yeah, I think the talking line is like B corpse meet the highest standards of sustainability, inclusion and equity. Something else, it's a series of business assessments that you take, and you get points there, it's shift. There's some movement there and exactly how it's going to be evaluated. But basically, you know, you got to look out for your environmental community impact. And, you know, one of the things I love this, like, one of the requirements is your, if you have a healthcare, you know, benefits for your team, it has to include trans health care. It has to include mental health care, it has to include, right, and so there's just all these kinds of things. It's just like, really thoughtfully, making sure that everybody is on the right side of history, you know, well,

**Maria Ross** 26:50

and I love and I think it was probably around the time that I met you, when I realized that for profit businesses can be B corpse. So not everybody. There's always been this binary thing of either I'm helping the world or I'm making a ton of money. And the whole point of the empathy edge, you know, as I'll say, in my sign off, is that cashflow, creativity and compassion are not mutually exclusive. It doesn't mean we're trying to exploit compassion to make money, it just means that you can do both. They're both achievable. And you don't have to choose one or the other. And so you know, through you, I've met, you know, website developers, developing agencies who have who are B corpse. I've met other companies, like you said, you can't be an office supply company and be a B Corp. On my show, I'll put a link in the show notes, I interviewed an Ian Bentley, who is the CEO and founder of Parker clay, which sells luxury leather goods that are made in Ethiopia, and helps keep women from being human trafficked. And going into lives of prostitution. And that is a B Corp. So we need to change our mindset about what we think philanthropy looks like what we think social impact looks like. And what I love about what you're doing is you're saying, Yeah, even marketing, consulting, even even, that can be something that benefits the world because of the way that you do business. And as you were talking about all, you know, some of the requirements of a B Corp, I couldn't help but think, wouldn't it be great if one day in our world those are the requirements for starting a company? Right, not a specific kind of company? Yeah, at any company.

**Lindsay Lashell** 28:35



This is what's required to think it through on your on your incorporation docks. Yeah, I mean, I'll tell you like, quick plug, anybody else who wants to get involved I think be corpse in general, the next step really is to get to have it be a consideration and government contracting. That feels like right like right now you can have like minority ownership or women ownership is a consideration I think be corpse should also be a consideration. Like that'll be a huge boost to our to that the movement when that happens. But I want to I just wanted this isn't like a strictly answer to a question. But I want to name this other thing. Yes, please. Because it's, you know, we're talking about profit and purpose and all this kind of stuff. And then at the same time, I'm over here talking about how my clients are all really underrepresented, underestimated individuals, whether they are founders of a nonprofit, or you know, queer, bipoc, whatever. And I am going to make a lot of money by helping them in an equitable way. And so I really, I want everyone who does who offer services, but even some goods can do this, to start to think about what sliding scale pricing would look like in their business model. That is how that is how we control for opportunity, right? To me, the thing that I always say is that access to resources should never determine access to resources. Otherwise, we are just going to continue to perpetuate the, you know, investment models and really exploitative capital that has been making business run in this country since it was started. And so for me, it's it is, I am so passionate about my work, and it is priced in a very intentional way, where I know I know what it's worth. And I understand that a lot. And I'm making it available in a bunch of different ways, right? Like I'm working on like, I'm working on my book right now. So you'll actually have access to like, a workbook where you'll get everything you need for like, 25 bucks, cool, go do that, you know, and then there's like, self serve online courses. And then I have like, small like cohort like entrepreneur cohorts that I work with. And so there's all and then of course, there's like, the big ticket is the is the like, one on one consulting, right. But it's like, that huge range means that the work, the value of it can be available to anybody, because I don't want, I just don't want to continue to perpetuate the privilege that comes with this kind of business intelligence, really, you know,

**Maria Ross 31:16**

well, and I love it. Because you're building the sliding scale, you know that I think the thing that makes a lot of entrepreneurs pause when they hear sliding scale is, but what if I end up doing all this work? For no money? Right? And I love how you're flipping that on its head, it's about having maybe different offerings at different price points. Yes, with that, you know, with your book, you write it once it's available, it can actually scale, right? Versus your one on one bespoke engagements. That might not be something you're going to offer on a sliding scale. Or maybe you will make that choice, right? And you get to decide what's in scope of that threat. Someone can go, Okay, well, maybe I'm not gonna get 100% of the benefit of it. But I'm gonna get 80% And you're not going to feel resentful offering it? That's right. I think that's the mistake is some entrepreneurs get so gung ho about that, that they start offering everything on a sliding scale, and then people are paying them like, you know, \$100 for 40 hours of their time. And that's not promoting equity and opportunity either for you. Right, that's

**Lindsay Lashell 32:18**

including ourselves, which is something that a lot of women consultants will do, right. So yeah, no, I do. I think it's interesting, because one thing I'm toying with, I'll just like, mention it. I'm i This heard it here first, that Yeah, exactly. The entrepreneur cohort, that it's six, it's a maximum of six, required found, like they have to be founders because it's like skin in the game. Right, right. And so and I'm actually

thinking about offering this as a little bit like pay what you can model, like, there's the price, there's the equity discount, and then there's the I have the privilege and opportunity to help cover the equity discount. And so I think that's the the, you know, there's the retail, the retail plus and the retail minus sort of pricing structure that I'm going to that I'm going to introduce this year. So I'm excited to see how that goes. Yeah,

**Maria Ross** 33:14

definitely. You'll have to report back. Yeah. Well, any other final thoughts to folks listening, whether they're working for themselves, or they're working within a larger organization and really struggling with trying to and I know, I struggled with this early in my career of like, how do I take my business skills and still do good in the world? Right? What's your advice to people as they try to look at aligning their purpose with their paycheck or their purpose with their profit?

**Lindsay Lashell** 33:42

That's a good question. I think, I think it's really kind of, it feels so cheesy, but I really do believe this. I think it's just like, being empathetic with yourself. Like, understand, listen to yourself, when you that little voice tells you what you actually want to be doing. And it's it's not what you are doing. Because I think, you know, is it Gay Hendricks that writes about the zone of genius. Right? Like, that's like, the most powerful thing is when you know you are doing what you are great at. And so I think as entrepreneurs, especially, it's really easy to get sort of blown around by what clients or prospects are asking us for and stuff like that. And I when you get to a place where you know what you are for this is one of the reasons why I am so grateful like this. I had a wonderful conversation with a client slash friend slash coach. And it was about knowing what you're for, and what you're not for. And, you know, to use some like relevant examples like roe gets overturned. That's upsetting to me. But I am not the best person to fight that battle. I can help the people who are here to fight that battle. But that is not the best use of me, right? Something like the school shootings is another thing that's like really upsetting when it happens. And I am comforted by knowing that like, I know what my battle is. It's not gun control. It's not abortion access. My battle is entrepreneurship opportunity and equity. And that's what I'm here to do. And I think if you figure out what it is that you are here for, there's a business model there. There's a business model that that part is not the hard part.

**Maria Ross** 35:34

I love what you're saying because it reminds me of a past guest, Elisa camel, hoard Paige who co wrote the book, roadmap for Revolutionaries, she often talks about the fact of a term called triaging your it's not your passions, triaging your causes. Yeah, and making this a community effort because one person can't fight on every front. Exactly. So if you can get yourself into a collective or in a group where, okay, these are all the issues that that are important to me. And Lindsay, I know you're on this and this and you know, Jane, over here you're doing, you're focused on this, and this, and I'm going to focus my genius on this in this and as a group, we're going to tackle these problems. But I love that she's got an in her book roadmap for Revolutionaries. Like I said, she co wrote that with two other female authors, they talk about how to become an activist. And without burning yourself out without thinking you've got you have to be the one to solve all the problems, right. And so it's kind of goes to also towards purpose. And I think many of us, at least speaking for me struggled with that in our 20s.

And you know, there was just so much and it and it paralyzed you to actually do nothing at the time. And so when we

**Lindsay Lashell** 36:47

Sorry, I was gonna say like, I was an elementary school teacher in my 20s. Because that's, that was the path that I could see to how I can contribute. Right? Yeah, turned out that I mean, I love teaching and I learned a ton, I wouldn't be great at my job today, if I hadn't done that, then right. Also, student loan debt, and, you know, trying to pay rent by myself and all these things, like I burned out in five years, as many public school teachers do. Because it's just, it's a, again, it's an exploitative job, taking advantage of the purpose of purpose driven individuals that want to do it. Yeah. So yeah, so that's I we're, like, wandering around trying to figure out how to, where does the purpose get applied? And I think, just figuring out which is the which is the thing that that is, you know, from you first, and then whatever marketing activist accounting activists like they like, right, like anybody

**Maria Ross** 37:44

activist Yeah.

**Lindsay Lashell** 37:48

thing, because if you're, if you're purposeful, and thoughtful, and really care, you know, like, yeah, you know, know what you're doing like this,

**Maria Ross** 37:55

find a way to apply those skills. I remember when I was getting ready to go to college. And I was a little bit for Lauren, about the fact that I really loved marketing. And I knew I wanted to major in like marketing or advertising. And I remember having a conversation with my mom in the car, and saying, but it's not really noble. And she was like, well, Maria, society still needs to function. Not everybody can actually do a noble profession, but you can be noble within your profession. And that was, I think what I was always trying to seek out was like, of the thing I loved to do, and that I was good at. How could I apply it to better the world to better other people to help other organizations or other individuals? And maybe they're the ones on the frontlines? Yeah. And I'm not I'm just helping to market and amplify their work. Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. Oh, my gosh, I love this so much. Such a great conversation. It's so inspirational. Lindsey, I

**Lindsay Lashell** 38:48

know I love talking to you can I just throw out like one more idea that popped in my head, I just want to, because we're talking about really purposefully, like reaching out trying to help whatever. And I just want to like raise a flag on white savior complex, and just like name, that if you are like me, white, and also very committed to making the world a better place, you need to educate yourself on white saviorism, because it's really easy to have great intentions and be an asshole.

**Maria Ross** 39:20

But it can backfire. Really, really.

**Lindsay Lashell** 39:24

And so if you are transitioning into more purpose driven work, please educate yourself about how to avoid being the white savior. And, you know, think a lot more about collaborating with and partnering with, rather than, you know, gifting

**Maria Ross** 39:41

or doing for this is a great segue into an episode I did with Heather Hiscox, who was yeah, she's amazing. She's, she talks a lot about about where social impact organizations and advocates go wrong. With the best of intentions, the to try to solve problems for people versus solving problems with people, and I'll put a link to her episode because it opened my eyes to so much and especially for those of you listening who want to have impact and want to do good, there's a an effective and an ineffective way to go about that. And so please, if you get a chance, after you hop off this, take a listen to Heather's episode that I'll put in the show notes. But, Lindsey, thank you so much for your time, we'll have all your links in the show notes and your generous offer to take your social media course free. Again, it's called the Social Media solution, how to walk away from channels you don't like without sacrificing opportunity. And there'll be a coupon code for empathy edge listeners to get that \$50 course for free, open access. And again, all your links will be there. But for folks on the go are working out right now as they're listening to this where's the best place they can find out more about you and your work?

**Lindsay Lashell** 40:53

Yeah, so my website is open dash lines.co. There's all kinds of information you can like download a chapter of the book or sign up for a course or whatever. And then if you want, like more my very strong opinions, just search for me on LinkedIn. Right?

**Maria Ross** 41:10

Yes, thank you. You're very strong opinions are very insightful, so keep them coming. Thank you so much for your time. And thank you everyone for listening to another episode of the empathy edge podcast. As always, if you liked what you heard, please share it with a friend or a colleague. Don't forget to rate and review as well. And until next time, always remember that cash flow creativity and compassion are not mutually exclusive. Take care and be kind. For more on how to achieve radical success through empathy, visit the empathy edge.com. There you can listen to past episodes, access shownotes and free resources. Book me for a Keynote or workshop and sign up for our email list to get new episodes, insights, news and events. Please follow me on Instagram at Red slice Maria. Never forget empathy is your superpower. Use it to make your work and the world a better place.