!!!

Let's take a moment of silence right now. Stop reading and take a minute of silence to focus on the sounds around you.

Now turn your attention to your breath.
Listen.

Re□ect.
What do you hear?
Where have your thoughts wandered to?
Did your thoughts feel ampli□ed?

I'm sitting here, writing this essay, silently. □e people around me are not silent; they're having their own conversations. □ey're taking part in their own lives. Each one of us is living our own individual life and we connect with each other in this moment by being in the same space. Is the person sitting across from me aware of the fact that I am now focused on him? Where have his thoughts wandered to while he also sits silently, writing away at whatever it is on his laptop? Are we taking a moment of silence together because we are both currently quiet? I am here having my thoughts wander from one thing to another while maybe he sits there quietly contemplating whether or not to send a text message.

With that moment given to me to sit in silence my mind has entered into a loud world of moving ideas all chasing a□er each other, endlessly cycling, into a tumbleweed rolling on and on until the moment is broken by outside sound. When the minute is over, the volume of my head balances out with the volume of the world. □ere is no silence inside or outside of my brain but at least they are at average levels that are maintainable.

Although we use silence to honor people, silence also leads to oppression against the same groups of people we're trying to honor.

Before and a□er the moment of silence at the Black Lives Matter protest, all the thousands of people in attendance marched through the streets of Denver chanting:
"Say his name, George Floyd!"
"Say her name, Breonna Taylor!"
"No justice, no peace! No racist police!"
"What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!"