



Grief

Guideposts to Personal &

Collective Freedom

Candice Rose Valenzuela

“In my village when people are grieving, we do not say, “Are you done crying?” We say, “Have you cried enough?”



Sobonfu Somé.

Embracing Grief, by Sobonfu Some

Wrestling with grief

- What does it matter that we cry enough?
- In the face of increasing annihilatory crisis globally, do we have time/space to grieve?
- Is grieving anything more than a sentimental endeavor, reserved for those with the privilege of time (and money for therapy)?

She visits at 2am

- **MIND**; brain fog, memory flashback, time blindness, sensory sensitivity, name confusion
- **BODY**: Muscle & joint pain, increase heart rate, extreme fatigue, sleeplessness, night waking; intense heartache
- **SOUL**: Vast, inescapable wrestling with mortality, identity & purpose for life.

Surviving

- **MIND:** allowed space to collapse, minimized all cognitive labor, nonlinear writing & speaking to trusted friends
- **BODY:** as much rest as possible, walks, let others feed me, tantrum and give up as needed.
- **SOUL:** surrender; alienation, personal grief unfolded into grief for all beings

She brings gifts

- **MIND**; steadiness, patience & expansive ways of processing & thinking
- **BODY**: heightened sensitivity to my own feelings & the states of others; embodied compassion & deeper relating
- **SOUL**: rewoven belonging, space for aliveness & joy; desire to live fully as I recommit to liberation



Emerging wisdom

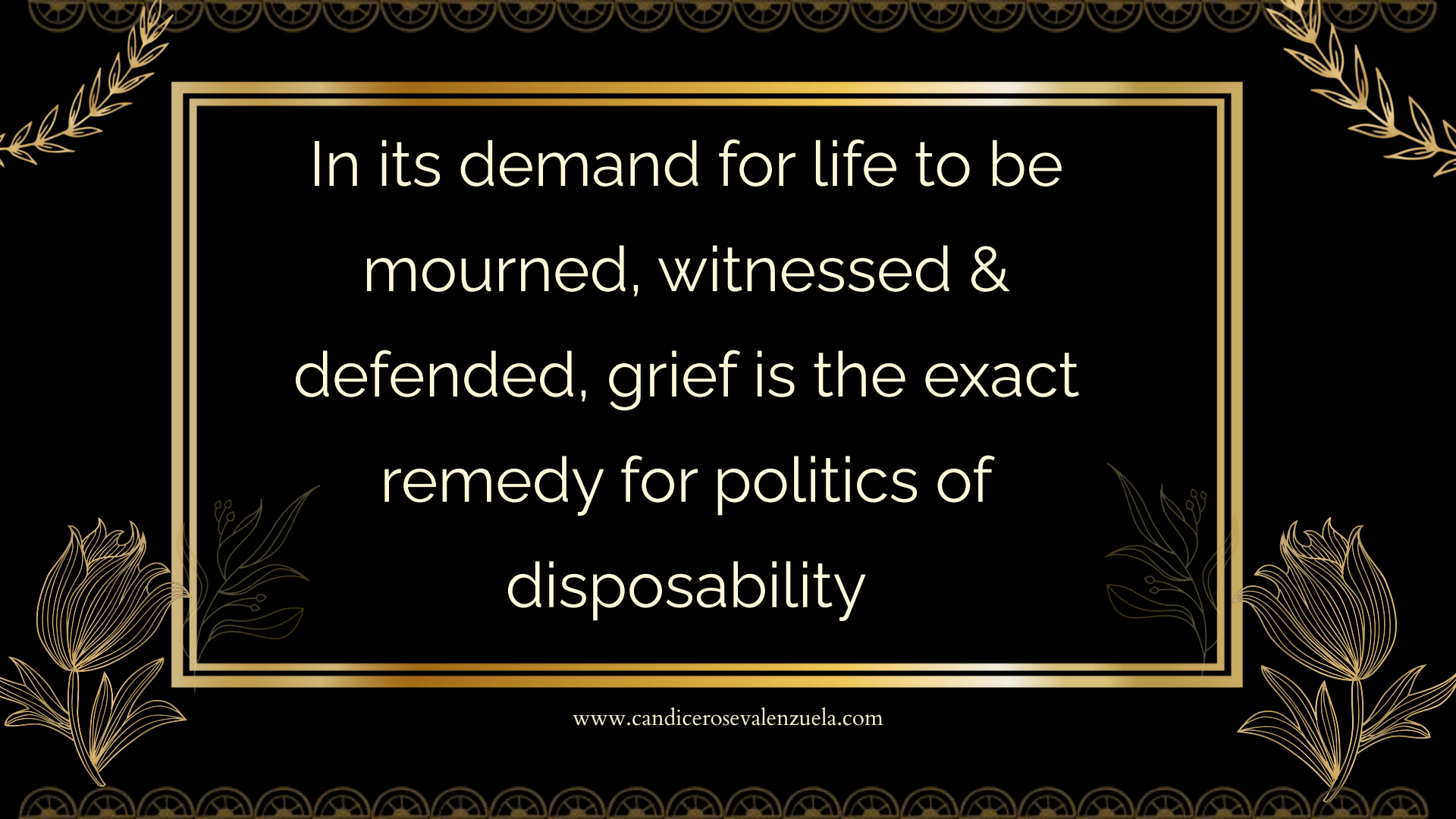
- In grief, we encounter all losses, past, present, future, near and far.
- We are woven into each other's neural networks, bodymindsoul, on the land.
- The body responds to loss as a life threatening event; revealing the raw truth of our interdependence.

Collective Grief Debt

- Multiple past & present genocides mark our time
- Climate chaos, ecocide, species extinction
- Life increasingly deemed disposable in the global economy; enslavement, mass detention, extreme cuts to life-giving policies, institutions & networks of care

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In its demand for life to be
mourned, witnessed &
defended, grief is the exact
remedy for politics of
disposability



Guidepost for our

Behind the door of grief is everything we've sought to
times
avoid individually & collectively.

Only by metabolizing the losses we most fear, do we
embody the sacredness, dignity & power of life itself;
weaving ourselves back into a world of care, sacredness &
belonging.

Historical memory - embodied feeling - interdependence

Questions for *practitioners*

- How can we allow ourselves to be witnessed in our grief as we witness others?
- How might grief be a helper, not hindrance, in our work for liberation?
- How might our work invite "grief justice" - creating more space to openly mourn, remember and mend social scars?

A decorative gold floral border on a black background. The border features a repeating pattern of small circular motifs at the top and bottom, and larger, stylized floral and leaf designs on the sides. A large, thin gold circle is centered on the page, containing the text.

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