

# "We Begin Whole, and We Can Be Whole Again"

Opening Keynote

**Teddy McGlynn-Wright**



***"Becoming aware of grief gives us more choices about how to respond to grief and opens up possibilities to approach grief not only with compassion for self and others, but also with joy.***

***Joy is not the opposite of grief. Grief is the opposite of indifference.***

***Grief is an evolutionary indicator of love — the kind of great love that guides revolutionaries...***

***Along my own journey, what surprised me most was the discovery that grief is not an enemy to be avoided. In fact, resisting grief led to my suffering, while becoming intimate with grief led me to the lesson that grief and joy are inextricably linked."***

— Malkia Devich Cyril in [Grief Belongs in Social Movements. Can We Embrace It? - In These Times](#)

**Day 1 – January 22, 2026  
9:30–10:15 a.m. PT/ 12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. ET**

***Life After Loss: A Special, No-Cost Two-Day Virtual Summit  
Exploring Grief Aftermath for Educators, Mental Health Providers,  
School Leaders, and Child Advocates***

A serene sunset scene over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water's surface. In the foreground, several trees are silhouetted against the bright light, their branches reaching out. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

*Tears rain on parched heart,  
quietly preparing it  
to stir with new life.*

**Paula Arai**

# Opening Practice


- We will never come together again exactly like this.
- What comes up as you acknowledge this?
  - Thoughts
  - Feelings
  - Sensations

# Introspections - in the chat

- What is one small matter that could use some grief?

OR

- What was it like to open with that practice?



**if you are softer than before  
they came.  
you  
have been loved.**

**Breathe**

nayyirah waheed, [Salt](#)

# Some Grief Frameworks

## Emotional Muscles of Grief

Cacciatore (2010)

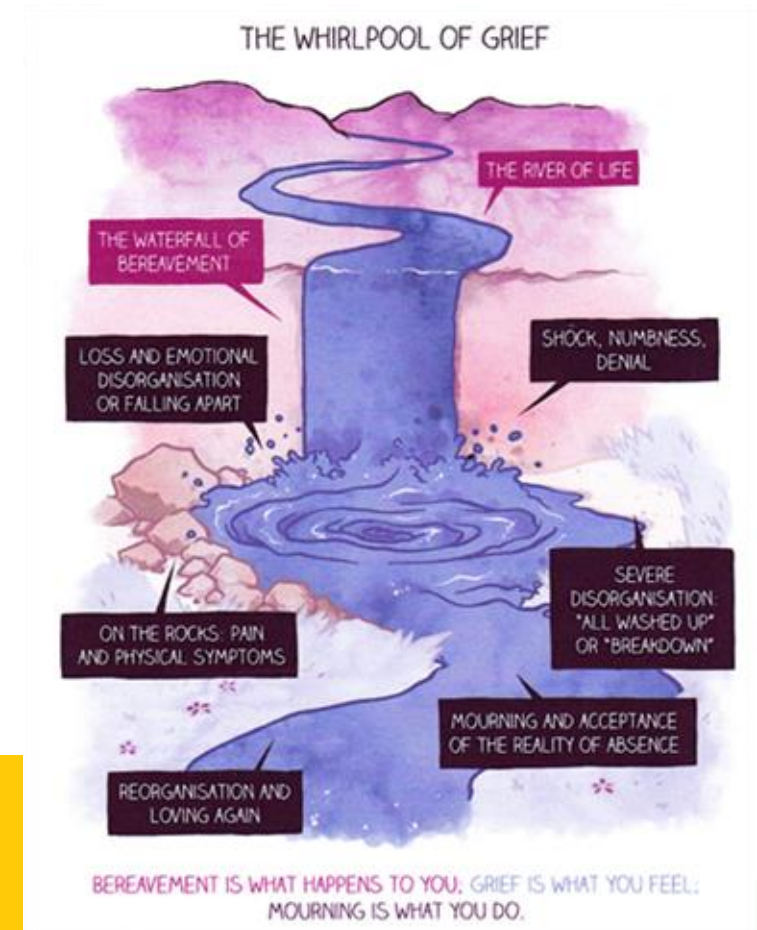
1. Grief as a constant
2. Emotional growth through willing engagement
3. Strengthened capacity to cope
4. Acceptance without erasure

## Five gates of grief

Francis Weller: Wild Edge of Sorrow

- 1) Everything we love, we lose;
- 2) The places that have not known love;
- 3) Sorrows of the World;
- 4) What we expected and did not receive

## Whirlpool of Grief



The Bottom line:

Grieve how you wanna

“To be ‘well’ is not to live in a state of perpetual safety and calm, but to move fluidly from a state of adversity, risk adventure, or excitement, back to calm and out again”

-Burnout, by Emily and Amelia Nagoski





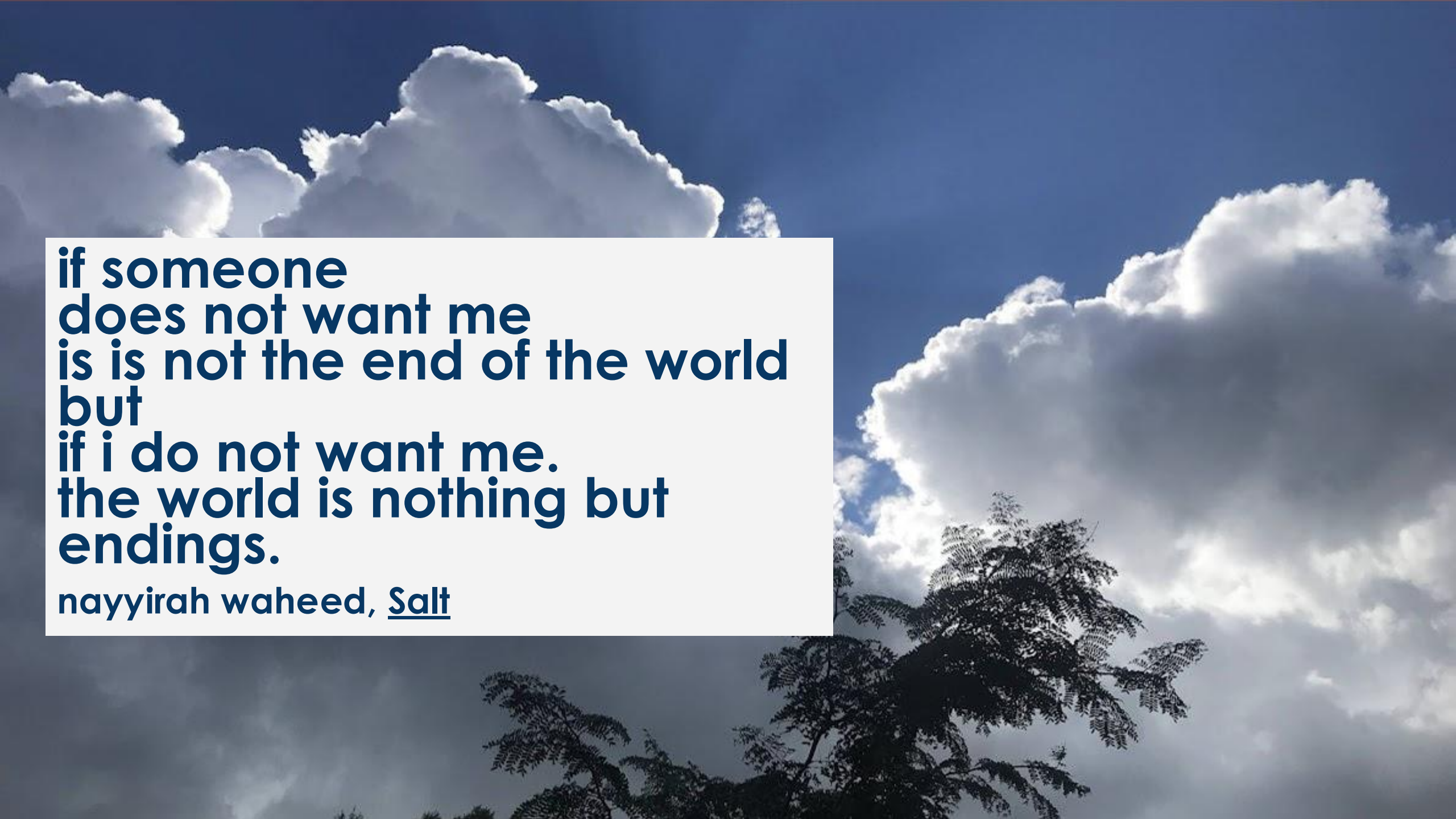
## WHOLENESS

**Safety:** the sense of being physically, psychologically and emotionally secure.

**Agency:** the ability to make a decision, experience reasonable consequences of that decision and make a subsequent decision.

**Dignity:** the sense of one's place and power in the world. Self-worth.

**Belonging:** the expression of being connected, a full member of a group.



**if someone  
does not want me  
is is not the end of the world  
but  
if i do not want me.  
the world is nothing but  
endings.**

nayyirah waheed, [Salt](#)



**We begin whole.** Our birthright includes safety, agency, dignity, and belonging—fundamental needs of all being

**We embody trauma and healing** across 5 domains: individual, collective, systemic, intergenerational and/or historical.

**Trauma interrupts.** Trauma is the harmful interruption and disintegration of safety, agency, dignity, and belonging, and can be acute, chronic, cumulative, or complex.

**Trauma overwhelms.** Trauma is experienced throughout the body-brain, overwhelming our ability to cope with and integrate thoughts, sensations, and emotions connected to an experience.

**We can be whole again.** Pathways to healing occur anytime we do anything that restores or promotes safety, agency, dignity, and belonging and moves bodies towards integration and wholeness.

# Disenfranchised Grief:

— Dr. Kenneth Doka

**In which the griever does not have the opportunity or permission to move through grief.**

What are the circumstances or conditions that limit our space to grieve?

What happens when we are denied this space to grieve and/or mourn (individually and collectively)?



# 5E'S (AKA our physiological threat reactions)



**Context:** Threat is overwhelming AND familiar.

**Action:** Adjust expression to meet desires of the threat. Presenting a 'face' inconsistent with our authentic self.



**Context:** No way out...Threat is ever present.

**Action:** Immobilization, hiding in plain sight



**Context:** Cornered...Threat is present, no clear escape

**Action:** Move toward threat. Demand change.



**Context:** Safety is away from threat.

**Action:** Move away from threat. Can create temporary relief but lack long-term safety.



**Context:** Threat is present AND inconsistent.

**Action:** Overextension. Trading one fundamental for another.



“To be ‘well’ is not to live in a state of perpetual safety and calm, but to move fluidly from a state of adversity, risk adventure, or excitement, back to calm and out again”

-Burnout, by Emily and Amelia Nagoski



**QUESTIONS???**

LET'S BRANCU



## Kirsten Harris-Talley

A Belonging-Based Facilitator, community educator, and healer. A seer who clears the path and sits at the crossroads of change.

## Teddy McGlynn-Wright

A Belonging-Based Facilitator, politicized healer and aspiring tea farmer. A seeker of justice and trickster who helps us find our way.

**In the Works | [www.intheworksllc.com](http://www.intheworksllc.com)**

Our way of bringing intentional story, space, and solace to our communities of healers, educators, activists, and change makers. We know the real work is always “in the works” and needs stewardship and time



**Kirsten**  
Harris-Talley



**Teddy**  
McGlynn-Wright



This week-long residential retreat is designed so **co-leaders have dedicated time together** to deepen their partnership and collaboration. We invite **new and seasoned leaders** in non-profit, government, community movement building, arts collective, education, and philanthropic spaces to join us for **reflection, connection, & rejuvenation.**

**August 24 - 28, 2026**



Sonoma Valley, CA

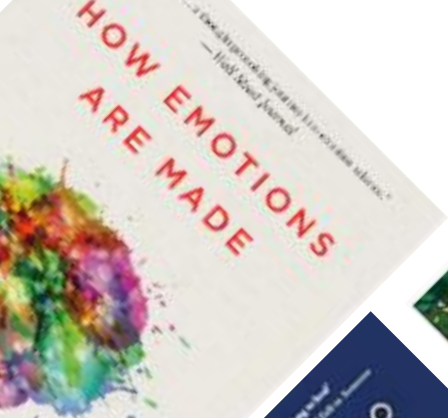
Learn more at


[www.belongingbased.com/co-led](http://www.belongingbased.com/co-led)

**Lead.  
Envision.  
Decide.**



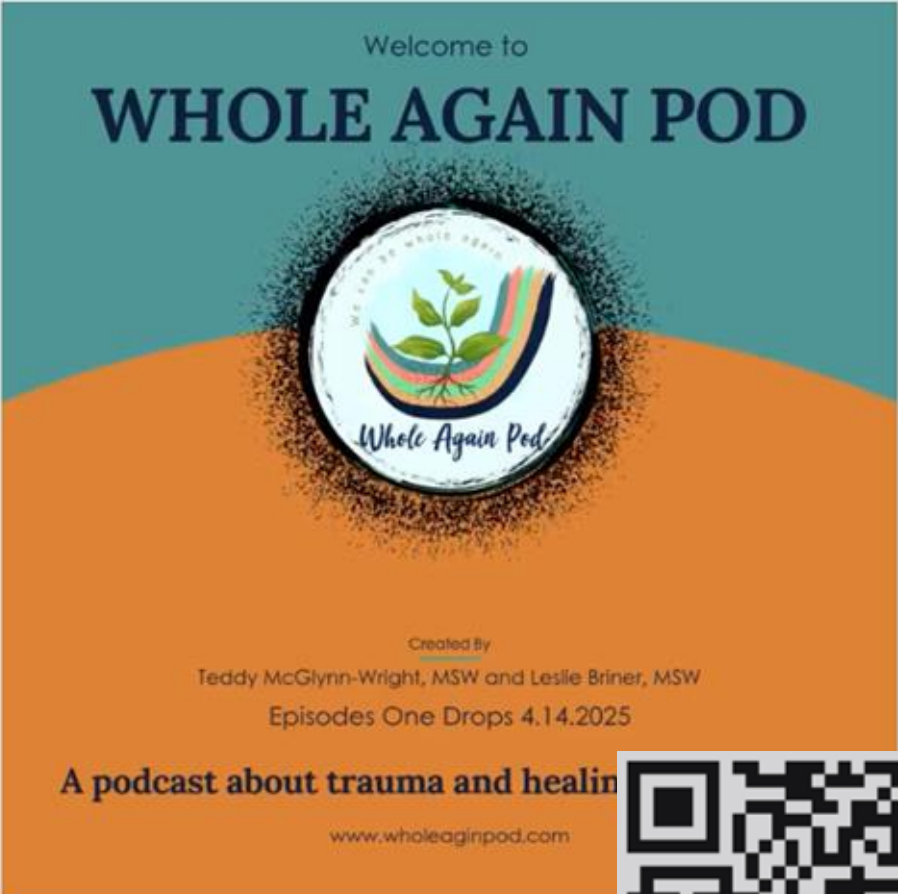
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We are excited to announce the Whole Again Pod will drop its first episode on 4.14.2025!


Welcome to  
**WHOLE AGAIN POD**



Created by  
Teddy McGlynn-Wright, MSW and Leslie Briner, MSW  
Episodes One Drops 4.14.2025

**A podcast about trauma and healing**

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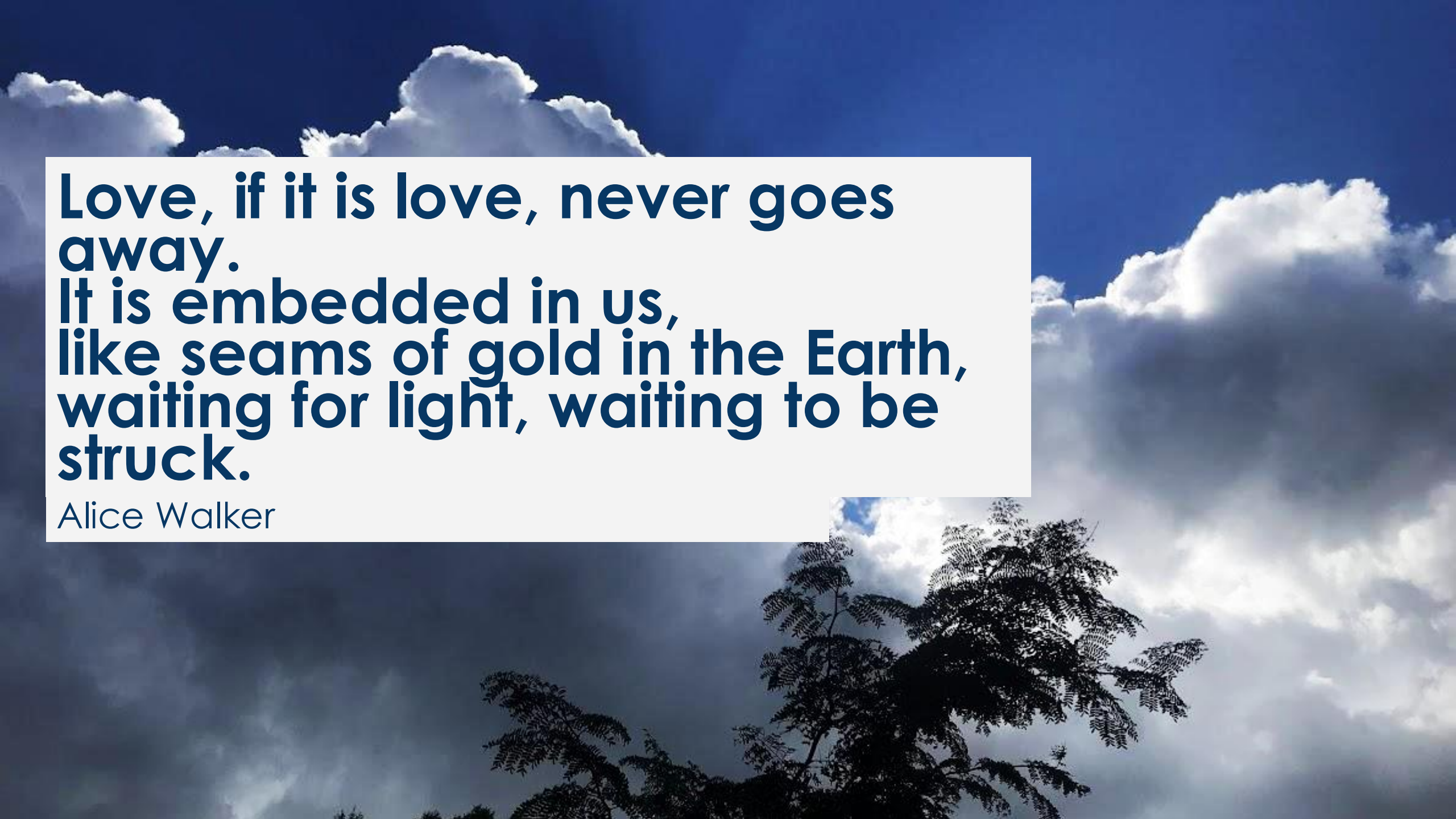
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**Love, if it is love, never goes  
away.  
It is embedded in us,  
like seams of gold in the Earth,  
waiting for light, waiting to be  
struck.**

Alice Walker