

Vidya Shah: (00:00:11)

Welcome to Season 3 and to another episode of The Unleashing Project. Today's podcast, Hospice Leadership, explores what it means to turn towards times of uncertainty, loss, grief, and crisis, to recognize and honor the presence of these experiences in the world and in ourselves, and to consider what it means to be with and transform these experiences through acts of reimagining and regenerating. We explore what it means to lead in ways that tend to individual grief, communal grief, and systemic grief. Now, you might recognize the term hospicing from Vanessa Machado de Oliveira's book, 'Hospicing Modernity', and that's exactly where we are drawing inspiration from. So I want to just take a moment and read a description of this book and urge listeners to read it. In 'Hospicing Modernity', Vanessa Machado de Oliveira presents us with a challenge, to grow up, step up, and show up for ourselves, our communities, and the living earth, and to interrupt the modern behavior patterns that are killing the planet we're part of. Driven by expansion, colonialism, and resource extraction, and propelled by neoliberalism and rabid consumption, our world is profoundly out of balance. We take more than we give. We inoculate ourselves in positive self-regard while continuing to make harmful choices. We wreak havoc, irreparable havoc, on the ecosystems, habitats, and beings with whom we share our planet. But instead of drowning in hopelessness, how can we learn to face our reality with humility and accountability? This book, 'Hospicing Modernity', has been so important to my journey and to my unlearning, and is the inspiration behind this episode, alongside the work of Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures, which is a project that Vanessa and many others are part of. In preparation for this podcast, I was reflecting on the ways in which I turn away from grief, from crisis, from change, from uncertainty, as some false sense of maybe self-protection or maybe a way to hide from myself or the world. But I've also been thinking about the times that I have turned towards grief and loss, and allowed these experiences to move through me and to transform me at a cellular level. I think about experiences of grief that I have yet to metabolize, the death of a family member by suicide, relationships that have ended because we didn't have the capacity to acknowledge and heal the trauma between us and within us, the existential reality that is the climate crisis, the loss of land and life and hope in Gaza, the historical and present-day manifestations of white supremacy and colonialism, the recent elections south of the border, and the knowing that this is our reality in Canada too. I think about what grief and loss feel like in my body. The parts that are stuck and the parts that are moving. And to be honest, I have been waiting for today's podcast, in part, because I need it so badly. And that's why I'm really excited to introduce today's panel, people who span community spaces, the academy, the education sector, and more, who I have learned from and whose work has been such a source of inspiration for me and for so many. And as always, if you want to know more about our panelists, you can find their full bios and contact information on the Unleashing website at www.yorku.ca/edu for education, /Unleashing. As with all of our podcasts, we have a wonderful opener. Someone who I have learned so much from and have engaged with in such a variety of ways, Myrtle Henry-Sodhi. Myrtle Sodhi is a Canada graduate scholar and PhD candidate at York University in the

Faculty of Education. She is an artist, a writer, a researcher, a mother, a daughter. Her research focus is Black feminist thought, Afrocentric thought, research-creation, and their application in redesigning systems within institutions and organizations. Myrtle is also one of the kindest humans I know. And I'm so excited to invite her to the podcast. Welcome, Myrtle.

Myrtle Sodhi: (00:04:45)

Thank you so much, Vidya. That was such a beautiful introduction, and, you know, I feel the same about you. I am, first and foremost, a storyteller. And I inherited that role through my great-grandmother, Ma Bessie. And we share something in common. Our words sometimes come out as stutters. And Legacy Russell says that stuttering is like a glitch. And I kind of, I reorient that a bit by saying, stuttering is a stitch. We're stitching sounds, thoughts together in our minds first, and then trying to get those out audibly. So you might hear that stuttering, and I use, it's something I used to be ashamed of. But it is something now that I embrace as part of the legacy of storytelling that I share with my great grandmother, Ma Bessie. Thank you so much, and I'm so privileged to talk here about grief. Grief is a tussle between remembering and forgetting. On the big window at the street-facing end of my office, I have an altar I have set up for my ancestors. There are three pictures that create an enclosure to the altar. The first is of my father. His picture is in the center. My father's death in 1979 set off a chain reaction of grief that took decades to subside. On one side of his photo is that of my grandmother, his mother, Pòpòt. Her name means doll. When my father died, she tried to forget something about him. I'm not sure if it is death or it is his love for her that she tried to forget, to keep on living. She held her grief in a small tight band around her waist. In our culture, when things are difficult for women, they are told to bind their waist. She bound the loss of my father to her until it caused her own death. Her mother, my great-grandmother, Ma Bessi, took that grief to the mountain where she gardened. She planted root starches and a multitude of things. It is said that the plants were an extension of her own life. And so, when her grandson destroyed her plants, she grieved them so much, she died soon after. The presence of my father, my grandmother, and my great-grandmother's photos on the window is a practice in grief and remembering. A practice in not forgetting to be more precise. Loss will ask us to both remember and to forget the things that prevent us from losing even more of ourselves. Loss is about dying to erasure and midwifing remembering. Decades later, I found loss again. This time, it was wrapped around the hospital room, where my husband and the father of my four young children lay. And this is why, despite the fits of anguish I felt when I heard he wouldn't make it through the night, I never felt like I could fully grieve him. Instead, like my grandmother, I was reminded to bind his grief to my waist. To brace myself because I could not afford to fall apart. I had children that could not bear the weight of my falling. Thinking back to that moment where he lay between life and death, I remember Bettina Judd's words, an artisan scholar, that grief is about the places between. It resides between life and death, remembering and forgetting, and bracing and letting go at the same time. Again, it is also a place where we are sometimes led to consider what we

have been told to forget and what we are forced to remember. Currently, we are living in times where genocide and willful acts of oppression struggle to pierce screens. These times ask that grief meet us in the in-between, between our comfort with what we have been told to forget about ongoing suffering, and what we are now forced to remember about apartheid, genocide, and ecological disasters. Grief is a skipping stone. Apartheid, genocide, and ecological disasters are often spoken about as if they are events, rather than conditions that are born from our values about life, relationship, and liberation. The grief and mourning, that is generated from these three, act in the same way. Rather than an event, they are more like a skipping stone that nicks and chips at the water, forcing its way across a smooth surface in what seems like unending successions. At times the nick is small, and at times it is severe, but they both cause movement and prevent the water from ever being the same again. Yes, the water settles, but it also shifts and causes shifts, coming up against the edges of rocks, the stretch banks leading to land, and creatures that are too small to witness. Grief can also be felt as a skipping stone because of the constant presence of loss that communities that face oppression suffer. Da'Shaun Harrison believes that an anti-Black world makes grieving difficult, because we are in a revolving door of loss. The loss that makes up our world, according to Jennifer C. Nash, is unrelenting, chance-temporal, anticipated, and sudden at the same time. This unrelenting nature of loss, according to Harrison, keeps us grieving, but not grieved. We do not get the full experience of what grief offers, because we cannot complete a cycle of grief. Before we know it, another death, whether social or physical, has occurred. This creates a state that prevents healing, but more than ever requires remembering. Artist-scholar Claudia Rankine explains, 'For African-American families, this living in a state of mourning and fear remains commonplace. And as a response to this, the Black Lives Matter movement aligns with the dead and continues the mourning and refuses the forgetting in all of us.' Harrison argues that this is what makes grief slow to arrive and is also what sets our healing at a distance. What does this awareness of the ever-present loss communities suffer offer us in the way of how to hospice grief? A question that is inspired by Vanessa Machado de Oliveira Andrieotti's work on hospicing modernity, where she advocates for a compassionate death to modernity, so something new can be born. There is debate about the difference between mourning and grief. Some say mourning is the public expression of loss and grief is the internal feelings associated with loss. Others say it is the reverse. Regardless of the meaning, there is a recognition that both are needed. The outward and inward expressions are essential to hospice and grief. Hospice and grief calls us to end the erasure of deaths that prevent a birth of grieving rights and the healing it offers. The healing is both collective and personal and requires feeling that is both personal and collective. As I mentioned earlier, my father died when I was six years old. I remember the drop of the comb that fell from my newly parted hair, meeting the ribbons that lay on my lap, waiting to join the mounting braids on my head. My school uniform of green and white lay clean and crisp on my skin. My mother ran out the door. My grandmother followed. I followed them, and the loud cries I heard up the alley and throughout the village. We arrived at the clearing in the yard of my father's house,

and all around me were women wailing. Some had thrown themselves to the ground, their tete case set aside; others stood as their hands took turns anchoring their hips and wiping tears from their eyes. A big pot sat on a large open fire. No one seemed to be tending it, but everyone would soon be fed by it. The scene was loud, crowded, and chaotic. This skipping rock of grief landed all around us, and no one tried to deny its affect. No one tried to avoid the way it would look or the way it would hit. It hurt, and the pain of it was felt and heard out loud in numerous successions. It is these ways of grieving that we have lost, both the collective nature and aesthetics of it. Grief is an embodied practice that also has been colonized. The appropriate expression of grief is often held within the restrained and somber words that are spoken, that occasionally accompany tears, rather than the sounding cry. As I write this, I am keenly aware of the pressure I feel to not trigger others with my grief. I wonder how I can invite you all into a conversation on hospicing grief without causing you all pain. What does it mean to house grief and nurse grief to death without centering oppression and suffering? Christina Sharpe, a Black Studies professor, asks a similar question when she speaks on black life and death. She is careful to not put the violence that frequently accompanies both on display. How do we grieve without retraumatizing each other over and over? For black communities, this is an especially important question because of the repeated violence we experience. Grieving for black communities and other communities brutalized by oppression brings with it this fear that if we allow ourselves to grieve, we may not return from it. And maybe this is why we have lost our grieving rights. Instead, we give way to housing our grief in walls colonized by those who don't want our wailing and our flailing to bring about their own. In West African communities, a lineage that I am connected to through my ancestry, grief is public and it remembers the body. It often takes shape through the movement of the body, the sound of drums and wails and orations. Grief is put out in the street and it takes time with itself. Grief like this is not an all too accepted way to express loss in Western communities. However, we see this type of grief on display to express the loss or win of a hockey game. But this type of grief accompanied by righteous anger to signal the loss of loved ones, lands, and liberty is not always invited. Malidoma Somé, an African scholar, explained, 'Westerners are afraid of emotion because they are afraid of loss of control. Emotions have a tendency to spread from person to person, and therefore social control to the Western mind is being risked with a display of emotion. You cannot truly grieve within and remain composed without.' We as educational leaders and leaders in general are forced to ask ourselves where and how do we make room in the institutions we work within for the birthing of emotions within personal and collective grief?

Vidya Shah: (00:18:54)

Wow. Myrtle, I have no words right now and I'm curating a podcast and I don't know what to say because I'm so just deeply moved by what you have shared. Thank you so much for those beautiful words, for entering us into this conversation. Dying to erasure and midwifing remembering. Grieving but not grieved. How do we grieve without re-traumatizing each

other over and over? These words, among many others, are staying with me. Thank you. Thank you for this introduction. I want to invite four additional people to enter into this conversation that Myrtle has started for us, four amazing people who think about and speak about grief in different ways. I want to welcome Breeshia Wade, who is the author of 'Grieving While Black, an Anti-Racist Take on Oppression and Sorrow', recognized as one of the best books on grief and currently required reading in several graduate programs. Her work as a lay-ordained Zen Buddhist chaplain, with experience in hospices and hospitals informs her unique approach to grief as a tool for anti-racist advocacy. Welcome to the podcast, Breeshia.

Breeshia Wade: (00:20:22)

Thank you. Grateful to be here.

Vidya Shah: (00:20:26)

Next, I'd like to introduce Jennifer England. Jennifer supports soul-aligned missions for the collective good. As a master integral coach and highly skilled facilitator, she helps high-performing leaders and teams access deeper fulfillment, clarity, and alignment to succeed in transition, uncertainty, and emergent collaboration. Weaving together her passion for personal growth, leadership, and emergent systems, she founded Spark Coaching and Consulting in 2019, and she produces and hosts the wonderful Tension of Emergence podcast. Welcome, Jennifer.

Jennifer England: (00:21:02)

Thank you so much.

Vidya Shah: (00:21:06)

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz is a professor of English education at Teachers College, Columbia University, and the 2024 New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development's Dorothy Height Distinguished Alumni Award winner. Her research has appeared in several top-tier academic journals. She's co-editor of five books and is co-author of the multiple award-winning book, 'Advancing Racial Literacies in Teacher Education, Activism for Equity in Digital Spaces', where she examines her concept of archaeology of self in education. For three years in a row, she was named one of Ed Weeks' EduScholar Influencers, a list of the top 1% of educational scholars in the United States, a highly selective group of 200 scholars chosen from a pool of 20,000. Welcome, Yolanda.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (00:21:58)

Thank you so much. What an honor to be here.

Vidya Shah: (00:22:02)

Last but certainly not least, I want to welcome Dr. Sarah Jaquette Ray, who works at the intersection of social justice and climate emotions. An environmental humanist with a BA in religious studies from Swarthmore College, an MA in American Studies from UT Austin, and a PhD in Environmental Sciences Studies and Policy from the University of Oregon. Dr. Ray draws on an electric range of disciplines and epistemologies in service of climate justice. She's the author of two books and is also a certified mindfulness teacher through the UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center. Welcome to the podcast, Sarah.

Sarah Jaquette Ray: (00:22:40)

Thanks so much. I'm really glad to be here.

Vidya Shah: (00:22:44)

We are in for quite a treat, folks, and just inviting as we move into this conversation to welcome your full selves into this space, your hearts, your minds, your souls, your spirits, whatever is calling to show up in today's conversation. And I'd love to hear from the panelists how they think about hospicing leadership, leading through crisis, loss, and grief. What does that look like in your everyday practice? Sarah, I'd love to start with you on this question.

Sarah Jaquette Ray: (00:23:14)

Yeah, this is a tough question because I want to tell it in a concise way, and I would like to say it was a done project and I know how to do this. Isn't that why you brought me on? But no, there's so many layers I'm learning all the time. In fact, I learned three or four in just the first few minutes of being with you all today. So yeah, I'd like to, if it's okay, because I have been really influenced by the work of Adrienne Maree Brown and your title, I mean, in her book, 'Holding Space', she talks about what is leadership in this moment? What does the world need in the world of grief in this moment? So there's so many themes. And I think it's a place to start. It says it better than in my own words. 'This is a time when we need a lot of facilitators and mediators, a lot of holders of change. We are at a very particular moment in human history, a period of time when we need to shift away from the competitive, directive, combative, colonial energy of toxic leadership at every level of society. The structures built to pierce the sky, the walls conjured to make the earth a puzzle of combating territories, keeping some in power and others without, all of these structures are crumbling. It is time to move toward ways of being that are focused on listening to each other deeply and accepting each other whole. We need to learn ways of being in space that together help us see beyond false constructs of superiority and inferiority, without asking us to sacrifice what has shaped us. We need to study being receptive and nonjudgmental with each other, letting the Earth and community hold us until we remember we already belong.' When I first discovered Adrienne Maree Brown's work, 'Emergent Strategy', many years ago, it changed the way I thought about teaching, about how my purpose and teaching should be. And that has then prompted a lot of other layers and scales of what it is that is supposed to be

happening. And so the question is a scale of my everyday life. And I'd say, you know, when you're cracked open with an invitation, like in that passage of what leadership needs to be if it's not going to be toxic and if it's going to be earth-centered, if it's going to be love-centered, that involves so much unlearning for me. I am absolutely a product of settler colonial ideas. Her invitation to think about how colonialism not just was a process that happened historically, but is a way that a system does its work through each and every one of us. So I'd say that the way that I think about it, in my everyday life, is the inner work that is required to figure out how those systems work through me so that I can not do harm and that my life on this planet can be in service of all beings. And that's not always fabulous, and I still have lots of ways to figure that out. But what it means for my life as a teacher in everyday practice is making sure I am showing up absolutely compassionate for them. I walk into my classroom every single day thinking, okay, what kinds of conflicts, what kinds of tensions, what kinds of critiques are going to happen today? And I just dispel all that by having a moment of practice before I walk in to meet students with compassion. And it has changed my teaching entirely. Also on a daily basis, if I think about everything we're doing through a lens of being in right relationship, and that relationship is the medicine that might heal all of this; it's the sort of bottom of the iceberg of all the systems, you know, problems, that changes absolutely everything that I do as a teacher and a person in my life. And I think that on an everyday practice level, this means focusing on process, not product, focusing on slowing down so that this work can be done. There's all kinds of ways that I'm doing my own inner work so that I can figure out how not to let my nervous system blow my own traumas and inheritances through other people and through the natural world. So I think I'll end with that.

Vidya Shah: (00:27:32)

Wow. Thank you, Sarah. This idea of being cracked open by Adrienne's work and others is such a beautiful image for me. Like I think about the idea of our hearts being broken open, instead of being broken and then closed tighter. I really appreciate this. Thank you so much for starting us off. Breeshia, I would love to hear from you on this question.

Breeshia Wade: (00:28:04)

When I think about hospicing leadership, I recognize the necessity of awareness and being in right relationship with myself and my own suffering so that I could be in right relationship with other beings and their suffering. The human condition, or not even the human condition, but to exist as a living being is to suffer, is to grieve, and accepting the reality of our existence and just the shared foundation of it is necessary in order to do any sort of work. So when I think of hospicing leadership, I imagine the constant work of hospicing myself, of cultivating a sense of awareness, and of, through cultivating awareness, taking accountability for my own grief; and in taking accountability for my own grief, I can then show up and be responsible to others. I think a lot of leaders show up and feel the need to embody a certain amount of certainty. But when I think about certainty, I feel that it is the

result of a lack of trust and faith, because nothing can be certain; we live every moment through uncertainty, and that's where our grief is born. And through accepting that uncertainty, through coming into right relationship with our own suffering, so that we can be in right relationship to other people, and help cultivate that sense of responsibility; that is how I imagine leadership. I imagine leadership as a mantle that we all must take in relationship to each other, and that must begin with our relationship to grief.

Vidya Shah: (00:30:09)

Wow. Thank you, Breeshia. Thank you. This idea of being in right relation with our own suffering so that we can be in right relation with the suffering of others; such a profound way of being in the world. Thank you for sharing that. And as you were sharing and talking about hospicing yourself, ourselves, I was thinking about how many times I've had to grieve younger versions of myself. Versions that were trying their best in the moment and likely developed because of something that happened, but nonetheless, having to grieve those versions and love them back into the fullness of who I am. Thank you for sharing that. Thank you for sharing that.

Breeshia Wade: (00:30:56)

I was recently having a conversation with someone about grieving future possibilities of myself. And that's something I really started doing in my mid-twenties when I felt like I wasn't the version of myself I imagined I would be. And in many ways, I felt like I'd betrayed the future version of myself or the version of myself that I'd imagined because of what it meant to show up in this world with our culture's understanding of grief and to have to function under those assumptions. And that way just felt like the greatest betrayal to myself and my sense of integrity. So having, just building off of what you're saying and grieving past selves, I am just constantly aware of the future self. I'm grieving, especially in today's socio-political climate.

Vidya Shah: (00:31:51)

Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. Jennifer, I'd love to hear from you on this question. What does hospicing leadership look like to you in your everyday practice?

Jennifer England: (00:32:01)

I'd love to start with a moment that was really profound for me about a decade or so ago where I was given a practice of slow walking. Like if you've ever seen Butoh, the Japanese dance form, like that slow, like so painfully slow that your whole body is sort of reorganized moment by moment. And I had this moment where I was doing the practice, trying to do it in the bushes behind my office so no one would see me. And I had this moment where I physically felt my head like meters beyond my body. I had this sense of profound disconnection. And it was an incredible remembering, becoming membered to the fullness of my body that felt like the moment where I began to recognize just how modernity had

informed my way of being and leading. Gender equality activists wanted to change the world, urgency fires were everywhere, walking fast, trying to solve everything. And in a way, I was living a mind-body split, you know, classic settler Euro-Canadian that reified the rational, that reified the separation between the mind and body. And for me, that moment of slowing down was the beginning of a new way of inviting myself to be in a different pace so I could begin to feel more. And to me, hospicing leadership means letting go of the predominance of the rational mind, of the expert, of certain arrival, linear arrival points. And to me, around inviting a greater intelligence, access to the greater intelligence, not only of just my individual body, but thinking of my body as ecosystem, my body as the collective, and starting to dissolve some of those borders that maintained a separate self. And for me, well, how do you bring that into leadership is my practice. And so, I think in terms of a concrete everyday practice, it is that move of slowing down physically in the body as a remembering to the more full intelligence that we all have access to. So, I'll just stop there.

Vidya Shah: (00:34:40)

Oh, thank you, Jennifer. This is remembering. This is something that Myrtle and I have had many conversations about. I appreciate this so much. And, you know, it's amazing, this notion of slowing down, which has come up a few times already in times that feel very urgent, that the perhaps natural or maybe learned inclination to go, to act, to activist, to move, to literally have to be with that impulse and look at what's underneath that impulse. And the invitation that you're sharing about slowing it down to see how do we engage differently? How do we engage expansively? How do we engage in ways that challenge the perceived separateness of ourselves? Such an invitation. Thank you, Jennifer. Yolanda, I'd love to hear from you on this question.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (00:35:43)

Wow. I'm truly sitting here just grateful and as a student, listening to all of you. And I think about my work with business leaders in business, I spent 13 years in corporate America, taught high school at night and transitioned to the academy. And sadly, more and more, I see how the academy and higher education has become; it's not just becoming more like business. And so I often feel that the work that I do with companies around anti-racism and archaeology of the organization, it feels like it's business everywhere, like I'm in a corporation and I'm doing it in higher ed, and it's the same. So when I think of this idea of what does it mean to hospice leadership, and I'm thinking in all the contexts that I work in, particularly straight-up business and higher ed, and I think about it means to operate with honesty, and to operate with an honesty that, you know, about where does leadership hurt people? Where does leadership neglect? And where does leadership pretend to bring joy when it really is just compliance? And we expect folks to accept it as joy because this is paycheck or this something that's attached to it. So I think a lot about just the sheer lack of honesty. And I'm thinking about my own institution that we operate in because we have to be compliant with raising students' numbers and balancing this budget. And leadership

often becomes, I would say, inhumane because it becomes more focused on the bottom line, and yet it is not honest about that because no one wants to say, 'I'm an inhumane leader,' right? I think a lot about what does it mean to be honest and have honesty be like the central mission, right? What would it look like if we were to be honest about the way in which, you know, certain forms of leadership do hurt people? And I think about so much now, but I think about Dr. Angel Acosta where he talks about the condition for suffering, I mean, for healing is to allow suffering to speak. And there are a lot of, there's a lot of suffering, particularly now in this political climate, particularly as we, you know, look at Project 2025, which is very clear towards certain communities and certain in education in my community where it's talking about eliminating free lunch, it's talking about not having, you know, healthcare, basic healthcare for children, stripping all of these things away, which are sure to bring harm and hurt. And if we are not talking about it, if teachers are not allowed to talk about the suffering that this will bring, how will healing come? And if leaders, deans, teacher leaders, chairs of departments, business leaders are not willing to talk about some of the suffering that is surely to come from the administration's plans that are to come for us here in America, how will we heal? So I definitely, I'm just thinking a lot about that. I'm thinking also about this idea of befriending grief and how, what if there are things about grief that we can look at, that it can be our friend, it can teach us something, and what does it mean to move with that? So I think I have more questions than answers, but what's sitting with me is what I'm not experiencing, and that is honesty and leadership. And that lack of honesty is causing a lot of pain for the faculty, the adults, the business, the folks that work in these businesses, but also when we talk about higher ed, we're talking about the students. Students are experiencing a lot of pain.

Vidya Shah: (00:40:12)

As you were talking, I was thinking about what would institutions look like if leaders told the truth all of the time? And I think about how many moments in a day we are encouraged to lie, told to lie, coerced into lying, choose to lie, and how much of our space, and folks who have been on this journey with us know that when we say 'leaders', we mean that in the broadest sense, but just what percentage of our day we actually just don't tell the truth, the whole truth? Breeshia, I know that you had some thoughts on this. Jump in.

Breeshia Wade: (00:41:02)

Oh, you too. On that, oh my goodness, I'm over here taking notes for myself because that was beautiful and profound, both of you on both counts. I'm just, I want to go back to what you were saying, Yolanda, about healing is to allow suffering to speak. And then tying that to what you were saying, Vidya, around, you know, institutions, and truth, what would it be like if we were all permitted to speak the truth? And in actuality, I don't think institutions can exist under the truth. It would be impossible because the truth is humanity and suffering. And in order for institutions to run, there has to be some amount of dehumanization and depersonalization such that when there is suffering perpetuated, no individual or people

can't be held accountable, it is the institution. So the truth has to be absent in order for that to happen. And I just, I really appreciate what you were saying, Yolanda, around working in corporate for 14 years and just, you know, showing up for students and trying to do the best because that's what we're here to do. We are here to support the current and future generations. And what does that look like if we can't support them in being honest or moving with a sense of integrity within themselves? And it reminds me of my own journey when I was working in hospitals and hospices and how I simply had to step out because, to monetize and turn death and living into a business was, it was too much for me. There was no way that I could exist and work within that institution and abide by my deepest sense of integrity. And I feel that that is honestly the only way that businesses are able to function if they are able to coerce us through our own experiences of grief. So for me, the grief was being able to pay for my rent, you know, being able to pay for food, being able to have health insurance, i.e., not die. And that constant grief is what kept me trapped in this cycle where I felt that I had to show up and had to compromise my sense of integrity in order to avoid experiencing that grief and to live. So, thank you for mentioning that and pointing out how that shows up outside of hospitals, really in every institution that has been turned into a business. So, yeah.

Vidya Shah: (00:44:00)

Thank you, Breeshia. Such an important point. And you're leading us into our second question, which is really about, you know, what does this way of leading challenge? What does it disrupt in how we live and how we think and how we relate to one another? And what challenges do you face in leading from this standpoint? And Yolanda, I'd love to continue with you to start off this question.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (00:44:27)

Sure. No, Breeshia, everyone, thank you. I'm sitting here thinking, you know, what would it look like if a leader were to invite their team, you know, to operate in truth and to participate in their own healing when the institution passes a policy or something happens? And of course, I think about it in schools. What would that look like? How does hospicing, leading through crisis and loss and grief disrupt our ideas of schooling and leadership? I mean, just having the courage to say that you're healed, depending on the body that you're in, sometimes is enough. And what I mean by that is when we show up to places, I think, again, now I'm thinking about teachers, how it's about, you know, teach the content, especially at the high school level, which is where I got my foundations. I'm not teaching content. I'm teaching children. I'm teaching human beings. And somehow when that comes in or that's mentioned, it's like a big disruption, a big interruption, as though I've said something that's like revelatory. And that's how far away we've gotten from the humanity piece. And I grieve that. I grieve that I have to say, 'Let's be human,' 'humanity,' so much in the professional development that I do, to the point that it is the bedrock of my teaching at Teachers College, and this is where archaeology itself comes up, that I'm constantly

reminding my students to come back to the human that you are, to come back to examining those biases, those beliefs, and be willing to hold the grief about who you thought you were, and sometimes you're not. But then to see it, when you're talking about hospicing modernity, how that can be somewhat of a portal, that where there's the death of one thing, so let's say the killing off of me, standing in this racism or standing in these stereotypes. Well, what is the beauty of that can be born with that death, right? And thinking about how this idea of critical love that I talk about in racial literacy, this profound ethical commitment to the humans that we're serving, that if we're willing to kill off that part of us that is interfering with us, seeing those children in their full humanity, that for me, that is an act of love. And I think about Marisa, what's her name? Marisa Renee Lee, her book, 'Grief is Love'. I'm sort of mixing genres here because she's very clear about losing her mother at 25, right? And that type of grief and realizing that it was so much grief because she loved her mother so much. So I'm just doing a lot of thinking about love being central, particularly in education, this critical kind of love that we need, and to love ourselves enough to be willing to die to certain things and to die to certain beliefs so that we can be born anew and best serve our students. And that type of grieving of the dying and then becoming anew is a beautiful form of love and of service to humans. So that's what I'm thinking. And I think that that is revolutionary. And James Baldwin talked about love being revolutionary because I don't think teachers are yet at that point where they really love their students.

Vidya Shah: (00:48:21)

Wow, this is really hitting home. I'm thinking about Bachelor of Education classes that I teach and graduate classes that I teach, and this notion of love is so central in those spaces. And I also think about, you know, our capacity to grieve in many ways determines our capacity to love. And I think about how important it is to allow and to foster opportunities for our students to grieve individually, collectively, together in classes because what we're asking for, especially in education, and I know folks listening to this podcast aren't all from, you know, the education sector, but especially in sort of care-centered professions, the ask is to be more human. The ask is to show up in the greatest form of our humanity. And how do we do that if certain experiences and certain ways of being in the world have been shut down? And we have shut down in that way. So as you're sharing, Yolanda, it's really having me think about, you know, the enabling capacities of love through fostering capacities of grief, to hold grief. Thank you for sharing that. Thank you for sharing that. Sarah, I'd love to hear from you on this question.

Sarah Jaquette Ray: (00:49:41)

Yeah, I think it's a good tee-up because, I will focus on the realm of education because I, you know, like, Yolanda, you had me thinking Bell Hooks the whole time. I have on my door, 'the classroom is the last remaining radical space in higher education'. And also another quote on my door is where she says, 'My students come in carrying so much trauma and grief, I don't

think they want therapy, they want an education that is healing.' And I think that's such a powerful quote because I have often thought, 'I can't be my student's therapist. They need their mental health. They're not okay.' And what is it that they need? And part of the challenge, the challenge you asked about in the question, the one I sort of wanted to focus on, I could probably list a million. It's easy to whine about all my problems, but how do I do this work that Yolanda just described in an institution of higher education, which is colonial and capitalist and getting more so. I dread to think what's going to happen in the next four years. But I think that we have this radical space of opportunity in the classroom to introduce questions like love and death and grief. Are my students, I see one of the challenges my students have is that they are really being, they're being incubated in these petri dishes of social media. And it's having them live in binary worlds. It is having them live in an apocalypse as well. The possibility of the radical imagination of whatever's to come that Vanessa Andreotti or Machado de Oliveira was trying to invite in her book, that radical imagination just doesn't exist for most of my students. They've been told by every corner of their, their media cycles that, what is around the corner is going to be terrible. And it's not that that's not true, but it is not the only thing that's true, and certainly an alternative of a world that they would desire rather than fear, surely is not possible unless they can visualize that. And so the work of the radical imagination, is difficult to do in institutions of higher ed. Students are resistant to it, if you'd believe it, .any of them. To convince them that love is an important thing in this moment, I think they think that's naive. My students do, I should say. they're, they're so, they're so sick of being, downtrodden and not seeing evidence. I mean, the amount of evidence they see about one thing after the other going wrong, they're getting, they're very angry about this, and love doesn't feel very accessible to them. I'd say also the notion that they have to pay the bills, right, to go to Breeshia's point earlier of her story, you know, trying to get in right alignment with vocation, right, with right livelihood. My students, I think, live in a cognitive dissonance world where they're first generation mostly. Their parents don't want to send them to schools unless they can get jobs afterwards. We know that Trump is going to base higher education, education based on evidence that people are getting jobs, right? So capitalism is now wagging the dog. It already was. Neoliberalization had already taken over higher ed. But while we're in these radical spaces of these classrooms as Bell Hooks would have it, we're teaching them something different, and I think that that creates this kind of ethical quandary for our students, that the world that they, that would give them a paycheck is also the world that's causing so much harm that they want to try to heal. So this is, this is one of the challenges as well. And, the ways in which I, as a member of higher education, implement these forms of oppression, these messages, these ideologies of capitalism, are also things I need to do a lot of work on. I've been inculcated in that too. And, and I still, to this day, I'm constantly thinking, oh my gosh, I can't believe I used to teach like that. This is just replicating that harm. And so I think those are the main limitations in the world of higher education have to do with this question of what can you do in your radical classroom given this institutional context? And even if you think you've blown open the most radical ideas, you know, I'm still a product of this too. And

I think that the speed of life, the production, the idea that you're going to have a deliverable, the kind of capitalist productive imaginary around students' activism, their classwork on their so-called, you know, potential career paths, is super harmful. And I think they're finally figuring that out, but I have had to reinvent learn things like ungrading practices. There's practices that one could bring to the classroom that are pretty liberatory. I think approaching a classroom similar to the way adrienne maree brown talks about facilitation is an important radical change a, as opposed to being the stage on the stage, right? So there's ways that the institutions of higher education, even in the very places that they put the seats that are immobile in a like amphitheater setting, the architecture of that tells us that this is how learning happens and this is how it's going to go, in a very, what I consider repressive architectural regime. And yeah, we're fighting against all of that in higher education. And in the end, it doesn't matter if the students have wellbeing and they can keep getting up in the morning and doing this work, or does it matter how much collectively carbon they get out of the atmosphere in their lifetimes? I don't know what the metric is to determine whether we're doing this right, but it does make me sometimes think I'm pulling the babies out of the river rather than going upstream. So there's that tension as well for me. So yeah, those are some challenges.

Vidya Shah: (00:55:37)

Thank you for naming those tensions, Sarah. I hold so many of them too, as you were sharing, I'm just nodding my head in here. And in agreement with what I experienced in my classes too. And also holding in my body when you talked about radical imagination and being able to really be in that space, the excitement that I feel, and then immediately the pain that I feel that follows that, that what if it doesn't happen? Like, should I actually dream this big? Like, is it going to be more painful if I dreamed this big and then it doesn't happen? It's this back-and-forth that I just feel. And so I so appreciate you naming that. Yeah.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (00:56:17)

I don't mean to interject, but as you were talking, Sarah, I felt something in my body too. And Vidya, I was thinking about, you know, Robin Kelley's work around freedom dreaming and what does it take? How much courage does it take and energy does it take for the teacher in the room or the business leader to freedom dream? And essentially, when we talk about the radical imagination, what he was talking about with the artists and specifically black artists, whose ancestors and them in their moment experienced so much degradation that somehow they use art to imagine a world that they've not yet seen. And I'm constantly asking myself, particularly when I teach with high school students, because I still do that as well. That keeps me grounded about twice a week. What does it take for me to freedom dream? And how do I sustain that? And it's not, I'm not trying to sell false goods, but I'm also trying to engage the mind and the imagination to see beyond what is, because at some point my ancestors, Harriet, Sojourner, Frederick, some of our ancestors here, they had to see beyond what *was* in order to get us to where we are now. So for me, it's an indictment,

Sarah, when you were talking of myself as role as teacher and what is my responsibility to try to foster dreams and hold my own, and also make space for when dreams are deferred. I do not have an answer. You just poked that in my heart.

Vidya Shah: (00:57:59)

Thank you, Yolanda. Thank you. Breeshia, I would love to hear from you on this question.

Breeshia Wade: (00:58:07)

Sarah, thank you. You made so many excellent points. I'm going back to what you're saying around teachers being expected to be therapists and how can you be a therapist in the classroom and students really needing to heal and just realizing how much we have intellectualized the process of healing where when people think of therapy, it, or the way that we are taught to go about therapy is often very mental when healing is embodied and healing is about knowing. And we are taught to forget. You know, we are, it goes against the capitalist agenda for us to know, because to know is to go back to what you were saying, to remember. And all of these things, they're constantly in conflict. And also bringing it back to the conversation on love in the same way that healing has been flattened into this one-dimensional concept, i.e., just mental healing instead of the whole embodied experience. Love has also been flattened into this one-dimensional understanding where it makes sense that students feel rebellion and rejection when love is presented as this flowery thing; and then they are looking out in the world, and there's nothing flowery about this. There wasn't anything flowery to begin with, if we're accepting the reality of suffering and grief. And certainly, there's nothing flowery to look at when we see the manifestation of that when people don't attend to their own relationship to suffering and grief. When love is intended to be the acceptance of even the emotions that cause us deep shame, like anger and frustration. And unless we are able to hold the tension of all of those things and be in relationship with all of those things, it's not possible to fully express or actualize love. And I think about this in my workshops with students when I am teaching grief-informed approaches to social transformation and social activism. And we talk about love, then, oh my gosh, there is a section on the unforgivable. Love that usually just opens up so much for the students. In reflecting on grief-informed approaches, so much of what draws students to activism and to make changes is grief. It's often born out of an experience they have had themselves or something that they have witnessed. And they take the experience of past and present grief and they take up arms via activism to prevent the perpetuation of that grief. And it is necessary for us to be able to support students in knowing and loving and imagining so that they can continue to show up to mitigate the perpetuation of that suffering and of that grief, so that we can all stay within right relationship with ourselves and each other.

Vidya Shah: (01:01:35)

I just had an epiphany moment as I was listening to you, Breeshia. I often tell students that what drove five, six years of doctoral studies for me was anger. And I'm now realizing that it's grief. And yeah, that's going to take some,

Breeshia Wade: (01:01:53)

And love.

Vidya Shah: (01:01:55)

And love, yeah, that's it.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (01:20:00)

And grief being love, right? So when you see people out on the street, they're motivated by a love for justice, a love for the people they're marching alongside. So like everything you were saying, Breeshia, everything, and this is just resonating with me so deeply. Thank you for this space. I feel myself lifting up.

Vidya Shah: (01:02:23)

I'm just going to read something that Sarah put in the chat. 'That grief is love without its object'. Woo! Here we go. Here we go. Jennifer would love to hear from you on this question.

Jennifer England: (01:02:37)

Well, thank you, Yolanda and Sarah and Breeshia. Just, I'm resonating with this two things. I mean, the love, radical love, the radical imagination, and the tension of that love allows to hold the full range of the human experience, suffering, pain, anger, desire, freedom. And I think your question is, you know, how does hospicing leadership disrupt, how does hospicing disrupt leadership? And I think one of the attachments we have as leaders or as teachers to anything is control and certainty. We've touched on that. And there's something so much bigger than us that if we can rest in and trust its own disruptive force feels so, radical beyond our knowing. And Vanessa talks about, Vanessa Andreotti, she talks about it. It's so hard to imagine us somewhere else when we're totally, we're swimming in the water of modernity, you know everything in us. And so what is that thing beyond modernity, beyond consciousness. And you were speaking, I was just thinking about, are we dreaming love or is love dreaming us into becoming? And I get tingles thinking about that because there's something so unknowable about this moment. And, but the knowing can happen in the intimacy of a moment; you know this intimacy of being and sitting together, or the intimacy of sitting with an auntie or a grandmother who is teaching us something important about plants or medicine, or the beautiful tenderness of sitting with someone who's ready to leave this earth. And in that intimacy, you can feel a presence that goes beyond identity, beyond our own individual wills of what we want to happen, into an intimacy that I think is the individual, unique experience of love dreaming us into being. And if we can touch into that

intimacy and that flow of creativity and love and radical imagination, can we support the youth and our and each other to be able to come together in a new way? You know it's we are surprised; you know I think that's the thing is, hope is surprise. Hope is an element of surprise where we're shocked or surprised into a new reality. And so that's what's coming to me in this, in this moment.

Vidya Shah: (01:05:32)

Goodness, Jennifer. Is love dreaming us into being and becoming? That will play in my mind for days to come. Thank you for that. Thank you for that. Folks as we think about you know and what I love about this panel is that our challenges have become possibilities and the third question is really about the possibilities of leading from this standpoint and what we hope folks might take away, and again we're not promising uh, we're intentionally not promising any answers here but what do we hope that folks will take away from this conversation. Yolanda i'd love to hear from you on this question.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (01:06:16)

I think Breeshia maybe tap something in you by what I'm sharing because it's feeling more like almost a summary for me that if there were talking points for people to listen to all that we shared, that I'm still catching up to. I'm actually a slow processor. But I'm thinking of leaders and finding the courage to heal themselves. That's what I really want people to hear this and say 'Let me find the courage to heal myself. Let me find the courage to be honest about who I am, how I've been raised to think, how that impacts the decisions I make, including the decisions I make'. And to have the courage, right, to say, okay, I'm willing to die to this so that I can, to use that same metaphor, be reborn in this way. And then, to have the courage to lead with love. Like, I don't think love is a curse word. I know that we don't think it here, but a lot of folks, especially teachers, still believe, you know, 'Don't smile till Christmas'. All those other things. So, to lead with love and honesty. I'd like to have people think about this as a call to action, or perhaps as a challenge to their spirit, to how they lead. That's what I hope for. Practical takeaways. Take a look in the mirror.

Vidya Shah: (01:07:50)

Thank you so much, Yolanda. Breeshia, over to you.

Breeshia Wade: (01:07:05)

That was so well said. The possibility and what we have to risk and what we have to gain is ourselves and all of us. We have the ability to gain the gift of ourselves. We are the gift. We are the gift as individuals. We are the gift collectively. And that gift has been stolen from us through the stripping of our grief, of our agency, of our ability to remember and to know. And by becoming and giving ourselves over to love and choosing to grieve and choosing to accept our relationship to suffering as individuals, and also our commitment to show up to witness the suffering of others, that is how we open up the possibility of being, the

possibility of ourselves, of our full selves. And that is what I hope people are able to reflect on.

Viyda Shah: (01:09:03)

Wow. This idea of giving ourselves over to love in what sounds like such a simple invitation is also a terrifying invitation that requires tremendous courage, giving ourselves over to love. Thank you, Breeshia. Thank you for that. Jennifer, I'd love to hear from you on this question.

Jennifer England: (01:09:30)

I think a takeaway for me is being able to be with reality as it is. And that is my biggest, hardest thing I've ever had to learn in this life is how do I not turn away from suffering? How do I not turn away from pain? How do I not turn away from the way I judge others and push others? All the ways that I other myself from my ecosystem, from my brothers and sisters, from spirit. And I think a takeaway for me is how can we just embrace the messiness of being human and our contradictions that will always be there. And if we can meet our contradictions as leaders and be vulnerable in the moment, I don't got this. This is a blind spot I have. This is a belief I've learned that can harm. I feel like that vulnerability opens up into intimacy and reciprocity with each other, that cuts through and creates space for the love and for the imagination that comes from that.

Vidya Shah: (01:10:48)

To be with reality as it is. Thank you, Jennifer. Thank you. And this invitation into intimacy that you've invited us into a few times now, I really appreciate that. Thank you for that. Sarah would love to end with you on this question.

Sarah Jaquette Ray: (01:11:06)

Thanks. I'm thinking a lot about a call I had with a principal of a high school locally post-election, about what advice I might have for her from a space of emotional intelligence around politics, which is sort of my jam. For her and her context with her suffering students, I wanted to know what the context was. What could she bring to this moment? What was possible with her community? And it became clear that the community already had a lot of distrust among each other, a lot of fractured aspects, and without doing that repair and healing, or even intentionally creating that as a priority before anything else, it meant that, therefore, there was really no way she could go about attending to the students' suffering and fearing without causing massive rifts in the community. And it raised again to my attention, again, Adrienne Maree Brown's words, again, something I've had to learn in my adult life: the importance of relationships as a form of resilience, as the glue of trust, that is the only way that we'll get through all of this. And if we don't start with that ounce of prevention, of building that inoculation, that relationship, that strength, when these things come around, we can't keep repairing. We can't come back and trust each other. And it made me sad because that was sounded to me just like probably what's happening across

the land, and all the high schools, you know, and not just in my community. And certainly, always happens in institutions of higher education where relationships are not necessarily the priority. And I do think about this sort of mantra of critical connection over critical mass that Adrienne Maree Brown talks about, the need for this being, you know, if we think about Indigenous thinkers who have often said the climate crisis is not about the industrial revolution; it is about the first contact where relationships were disrupted and therefore the disruption of relationships is causing this problem. And it also is like a feedback loop where the problem keeps making that worse. And we saw that in COVID. And that sort of responsibility to each other, the vulnerability it takes, the nervous systems being fully regulated that it takes to put your own survival and self-interest aside to be able to be in community, to find resourceness from that is the medicine for this. And it is also the means through which we will do this. And so I think that the main thing I'd like leaders to think about is prioritizing building relationship trust before any of the other outcomes that one thinks one as a leader is supposed to do. But this really requires having, taking responsibility for your own nervous system. And this comes full circle to Yolanda's point. Have the courage to do your healing before you walk out and do any kind of so-called leading. So I'll leave it with that.

Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz: (01:14:24)

And if I may just offer a text, Sarah, you made me think of Lorgia García Peña's, 'Community as Rebellion'. And she wrote it as a syllabus for surviving academia for women of color, which she eventually left academia. And she goes in this small book, she tells you why. But when you were talking about relationships and community and community is medicine, it really, really is. And it gets us through. So I just wanted to say, you made me think of Dr. Peña's work, 'Community as Rebellion' and as strength.

Vidya Shah: (01:15:03)

Thank you for that. And folks, we'll put that citation down under references on this page. So look out for it: 'Community as Rebellion' by Dr. Peña. Sarah, thank you for those words. Thank you for ending us on this idea of coming back to each other, coming home to each other, to relation. And I'd love to, I know Myrtle has been listening and engaging in the beautiful ways that she does. I can imagine there's like some beautiful drawing that's come out of today's conversation. I'm just, I'm just waiting to see it. But I'd love to turn it over to Myrtle and ask her to share some, some final words as we close.

Myrtle Sodhi: (01:15:43)

You know me so well. There definitely was a doodling happening as I had, as I was listening. So many beautiful reminders and so grateful for that. Grief is a feeling through others, a force that moves us to remember relationships. Sarah beautifully introduced the idea of letting the earth hold us long enough to remember we belong. An assertion influenced by Adrienne Maree Brown's work. Similarly, Malidoma Somé outlines the ways grief is handled

in the Dagara community in relation to the natural world. The natural world also feels its own ring of the ripple and needs to be invited into grieving with us. Water is an element that supports reconciling grief, sadness, and loss. Somé explained that when someone has experienced loss of any kind, the community surrounds them in water. The person is allowed to express their grief, and this grief is located and shared within the community while being held by water. Similarly, Breeshia's practice is often not appropriate for entering into right relationship with our own suffering. Words of affirmation and loss join each other. Malidoma Somé explains, 'Water rituals help shed the massive accumulation of negative emotions due to loss, failure, and powerlessness. In order to do a water ritual effectively, one needs a community. Grief is a community problem because the person who is sick belongs to the entire community.' Somé emphasized that visibility and recognition where grief is concerned validates the person and keeps them within the circle of the community. Grief within the community offers a feeling through others, what Moten calls hapticality. It is a way to find the self within the other and the other within the self. As Jennifer just reminded us, a remembering, a reintegration of self within community. I think of Emmett Till's mother and her efforts to make Till's death and dying visible to others. Her insistence on the body being seen through the brutality it endured was a way to engage, possibly demand, the grieving of the larger community that Till now belonged to. Emmett Till's death and funeral are both spaces and events that caused our collective loss that began as personal loss, moving us from the individual to the collective, again, binding the self within the other and the other within the self, a result of what hospicing grief offers. Grief is a practice in justice. More than a move to make Till's suffering go from the personal to the public sphere, the visibility of Till's body was a cry for justice. Rankin explains, 'The spectacle of the black body in her hands publicized the injustice mapped onto her son's corpse. Let the people see what I see.' she said, adding, 'I believe that the whole world is a place of justice. I believe that the whole United States is mourning with me.' Till's mother's insistence on the visibility of Till's suffering and death is similar to Seth's, the central figure in 'Beloved' by Toni Morrison. Seth needed to witness and enact the death of her own child. Seth chose to end the life of her baby girl, Beloved, rather than surrender her life to the endless deaths at the hand of a master. This act of justice, though complex and strange, returns us to what I discussed earlier about the undying nature of loss for certain communities. Seth might have guessed that she could not survive the many imagined deaths if Beloved had been taken and sold. She did not want to live a thousand, a thousand deaths of her child and chose to hospice her own grief instead. The hospicing of grief birthed something else. This type of hospicing recognized the need for a compassion end to be able to give birth again. Beloved was returned to Seth. She was returned through remembering. What Toni Morrison calls 'rememory.' Through rememory, Seth lived with the past, the death of Beloved, in order to bring parts of herself together again. The loss dismembered her child from her and Seth from herself. The rememory returned this dismembered parts of self to each other. Dillard, a professor of education, reminds us that, 'We must remember in order to be whole, remembering is an act of peace gathering, of collecting and assembling fragments of a larger

whole, of creating and innovating identity.' Dillard also beautifully reminds us that remembering is about bringing the members of ourselves back together again. And that could be the individual parts of our community, and it could be the parts of ourselves. And what happens when we bring ourselves both personally and collectively back together again? We are then able to claim ourselves. Dillard reminds us that memory is about being claimed as much as it is about claiming. I consider that Seth's attempt to remember is about claiming something and most likely someone. In the novel, a character reminds Seth, despite her feelings of great failure, loss, and grief, that she still holds value. And so Seth is reminded that she is of value when we read the words, 'you, your best thing, Seth, you are.' Grieving offers something, a reminder that we too, the ones left behind have value. Without hospicing grief, we may never be able to birth this awareness. We may be lost forever in the midst of the suffering, which does not leave enough room for us to see ourselves as our best things. So we remember, as directed by Yolanda earlier, that befriending grief can remind us of essential truths, one of which is, 'we are our best things'. Which also means, those we have lost, the ways of being and knowing we have lost, the ways of living with Earth in a way that is sustainable, are also our best things. By grieving, we're able to remember, and ultimately claim parts of ourselves, both in the past and present, living and dead, that we are bringing together again. In this bringing back the members of ourselves, communities, and the Earth, we are birthing a vision that centers being through others, justice, and to use Dillard's words, remembering what we have been made to forget.

Vidya Shah: (01:24:29)

Myrtle, I want to just take a moment to thank you for the care and the love and the ability to touch your own grief that you've poured into the opening and the closing. Because I think it invites us all to do the same. And to also call the names of elders past and present.

Malidoma Somé, Bell Hooks, Audre Lorde, and others who have called on Adrienne Maree Brown, on Harriet, on Sojourner, on Frederick, on so many who are here with us today. It feels like it's not just the six of us on this call, but that we are joined by many past and many future that we may not even know yet. And so a deep bow of gratitude to you, Myrtle, for all the ways that you metabolize grief, that you hold grief, and that your capacity to love is matched by that capacity to hold grief in just what I know of you as a human being. And a huge bow and debt of gratitude to the panelists who have shared so openly and so deeply and so beautifully across multiple sectors; and somehow finding ourselves in the midst of weaving together grief and love and radical imagination and hope and courage in such beautiful ways. And for those of you listening who haven't had a chance to see us, in many moments you could look up on the screen and somebody is looking off into, you know, a window and just thinking; or somebody's eyes are closed because they're viscerally experiencing what's being said. And there's a kind of magic that's created when people can come together in that sort of a way and share so openly and so deeply. I want to thank you, the listeners, for staying with us on this journey. This is the last of episodes for Season 3, and I couldn't think of a better way to end. We hope that you continue to join us on this

unleading journey. We hope that with love and courage and the ability to be with grief and crisis, we actually wish all of that for all of us so that we may remove the barriers, the perceived barriers between me and you, between us and them, between human and more than human. Thank you.