

The Well of Grief

Those who will not slip beneath
the still surface on the well of grief

turning down through its black water
to the place we cannot breathe

will never know the source from which we drink,
the secret water, cold and clear,

nor find in the darkness glimmering
the small round coins
thrown by those who wished for something else.

David Whyte ¹

Storytelling in a small group or personal reflection. One by one, each person shares their answer to the first prompt below. Then go to the next prompt and so forth. A person can pass.

- 1. Share how you have acknowledged and welcomed those times of grief in your life. Say more.**
- 2. Talk about how your parents, grandparents, and other family grieved.** What did you learn about grieving from your family?
- 3. Share about how you deal with yours and others grief.** How has that changed as you have aged?
- 4. Share about what you are grieving today. Say more.**

¹ [The well of grief by David Whyte - Famous poems, famous poets. - All Poetry](#) , (accessed August 6, 2024).

5. Share if in your grief journey you have seen in “The Well of Grief” the “small round coins thrown by those who wished for something else.”

From All Poetry.com: “Analysis (ai): The poem explores the transformative nature of confronting grief. It suggests that those who avoid confronting their pain will never experience the profound knowledge and healing that it offers. The poem's language is clear and unadorned, conveying a sense of starkness and inevitability.

The well of grief is a metaphor for the depths of human suffering. The speaker contrasts those who "will not slip beneath" the surface with those who are willing to face their pain. The former will never "know the source from which we drink," the essential truths that can only be found in the depths of despair.

The poem's imagery of "black water" and "darkness" evokes the overwhelming nature of grief. However, the poem also offers a glimmer of hope. Those who are willing to confront their pain will find "small round coins," symbols of the resilience and wisdom that can be gained from adversity.

In comparison to the author's other works, this poem is more somber and introspective. It reflects the time period in which it was written, a time of great upheaval and loss. The poem's message of hope and resilience is particularly relevant in times of adversity.”¹

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