

Francis Weller – The 5 Gates of Grief

Gate 1 – Everything We Love We Lose: this is the only gate we recognize on a cultural level, and yet, we seldom give it the space it deserves.

Gate 2 – The Places That Have Not Known Love: this gate refers to the aspects of self we deny in order to fit into family, peer groups, and the broader cultural systems.

Gate 3 – The Sorrow of the World: tending our Earth grief. As Francis Weller puts it, “We are born expecting a rich and sensuous relationship with the earth and communal rituals of celebration, grief, and healing that kept us in connection with the sacred.”

Gate 4 – What We Expected and Did Not Receive: For Weller, this gate has to do with “the expectations coded into our physical and psychic lives” due to our ancestors evolving for at least 200,000 years in relational environments and societies. The contrast of our contemporary life creates a type of deep grief that, Weller believes, we seldom have the language for or space to acknowledge.

Gate 5 – Ancestral Grief: The grief we carry in our bodies from the trials and tribulations of our lineages.

To open our heart to the sad history of humanity and the devastated state of the Earth is the next step in our reclamation of our bodies, the body of our human community, and the body of the Earth.