

**“We cultivate love when we allow our most vulnerable and powerful selves to be deeply seen and known, and when we honor the spiritual connection that grows from that offering with trust, respect, kindness, and affection.**

**“Love is not something we give or get; its something that we nurture and grow -- a connection that can only be cultivated between two people when it exists within each one of them. We can only love others as much as we love ourselves.”**

“Shame, blame, disrespect, betrayal, and the withholding of affection damage the roots from which love grows. Love can only survive these injuries if they are acknowledged, healed, and rare.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**Connection is the energy created between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued, when they can give and receive without judgment.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**“Belonging is the innate human desire to be part of something larger than us. Because this yearning is so primal, we often try to acquire it by fitting in and seeking approval, which are not only hollow substitutes for belonging but often barriers to it. True belonging only happens when we present our authentic, imperfect selves to the world. Our sense of belonging can never be greater than our level of self-acceptance.”**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Vulnerability:** uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure.

\*\*\*\*\*

**“Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go of who we think we’re supposed to be and embracing who we actually are. Choosing authenticity means cultivating the courage to be imperfect, to set boundaries, and to allow others to be vulnerable.**

“Expressing compassion that comes from knowing that we’re all made of strength and struggle and nurturing the connection and sense of belonging that can only happen when we believe we’re enough. **Authenticity demands wholehearted living and loving even when its hard**, even when we’re wrestling with the shame and fear of not being good enough, and especially when the joy is so intense that we’re afraid to let ourselves feel it. **Mindfully practicing authenticity during our most soul-searching struggles is how we invite grace, joy, and gratitude into our lives.”**

from Brené Brown: *The Power of Vulnerability*