

I know **maven.** now that I've been changed

mf *f* Maven Leadership Collective

CODA

Maven Leadership Collective
2024 Impact Report

M.9

(6:52)

All These Little Deaths/ Eternal Reprise

Maven Laurah Merisier (she|they), Founder,
Miami Soundspace

Aqira "Kiwi" Hall (she/her), Death & Birth Doula

Alexandra Martinez (she|her), Producer

Laurah Merisier (00:01):

My name is Laurah Merisier, and I am the Founder and Executive Artistic Director of Miami Sound Space. The song that Arsimer and I worked on started as a seed with this prompt, "All of these little deaths."

(00:19):

One of the great producers that worked with us on this project, King Friday, he's titled it Eternal. In Miami Sound Space, we have a chapter of Threshold Choir called Threshold Singers of Miami Sound Space, and these singers sing at the bedside of patients in hospice care, and palliative care, and other end-of-life services. And through Threshold Choir, the international organization, we have access to a repertoire of about 500 songs that are appropriate and have been vetted for singing at bedside in various languages that represent different spiritual and religious beliefs.

(00:54):

When I think of the little deaths that got me to where I am that have been kind of the catalyst for who I was to become or who I am to become, the things that come to mind first are the relationships that have come and gone. I try my best to honor the fact that relationships, these people were once intertwined in my life, and even if we are no longer in community or if they're no longer with us, honoring the role that they played when they were a part of my life. I think everyone that we meet teaches us something, even if it takes us time to process what it is that they've taught us. Those seeds that they've planted in us and through the relationship that we had shapes who we are in some way.

(01:42):

Two of my grandfathers passed away. In the last three years, I was witness to their withering away and seeing them transform into something else. That has inspired me to want to understand the process of dying, and then this practice of singing to my patients and singing with my fellow choir members has really helped me understand what living needs to be.

Aqaira "Kiwi" Hall (02:17):

So a death doula can take on many roles. You can be a death companion, which sometimes people just don't want to die alone, so you can be there with them in their final moments. You can do death meditations. In those, I help the person who is grieving their loss of their loved one. My name is Aqaira Hall. Most people know me as Kiwi. I am a death doula.

(02:45):

Beforehand, I like to take a nice herbal shower or bath, if I can. I really like it because it makes my skin soft, and it is a calming scent for me. Whether it's at my house or their house, I have this blanket, this blue blanket that I take, and I lay it out for the people to lay down for the meditation. I spray it with this lavender spray to help you calm down, and I play the love frequency, the 532 frequency for them, and then I guide them through a meditation.

(03:22):

After they go through the meditation, oftentimes, while going through the meditation, a lot of times, they cry, and that's completely up to them if they want to cry, if they want to yell. It's their space to do whatever they need to get through this process. So many people experience major deaths, and even I learned the term that people experience little deaths.

(03:51):

Little deaths are career changes, friendship endings. When you have to leave yourself, shed an old part of yourself because a lot of people don't talk about when you grow as a person and you have to leave the other part of you behind. Because of your growth, oftentimes, you grieve the old person that you were. I think we all need places of joy where we can reflect on how good life is, because even though we're going

through something hard and we are grieving through a process, a lot of times, it's hard to see the other side of it. And if you can go to a place that brings you joy, where you can say, "Okay. What's something good that's going on?" You're just going through a hard time, which doesn't last forever. You won't go unscathed of someone dying around you.

(04:39):

When you experience a little death, you should give yourself grace, because you are still a person who is growing and learning. If it's a big death, find something that gives you joy. Something that I learned to do ahead of time, I have a list of things that gives me joy, and maybe you want to tape it somewhere where you will have it as a random reminder that, "Hey, this and this gives me joy." It doesn't have to be a long list, just something that you know that you can go to always being have joy. Also, have two different happy playlists, a playlist of songs that just instantly makes you happy. That makes a big difference.

(05:24):

If you're going through a little death or a big death, just give yourself compassion. So give yourself grace and be compassionate to yourself because you need it. Why be hard on yourself when so many other things are already hard on you?

Laurah Merisier (05:40):

I think when people are passing away, our nervous systems are so heightened, and we are moving so quickly, and we are attending to their needs, that there isn't really enough space to let the feelings process in our bodies. And our songs give people the opportunity to sit in the transition and to experience all that is to be experienced, which is challenging, but important to the healing process that follows grief.

MUSIC (06:09):

Spirits make a place for you.

(06:09):

Love has made a place for you.

(06:10):

Love has made a place for you.

(06:27):

Grace has made a place for you.

(06:29):

Grace has made a place for you.

(06:31):

Where everything is new.

(06:31):

Where everything is new.