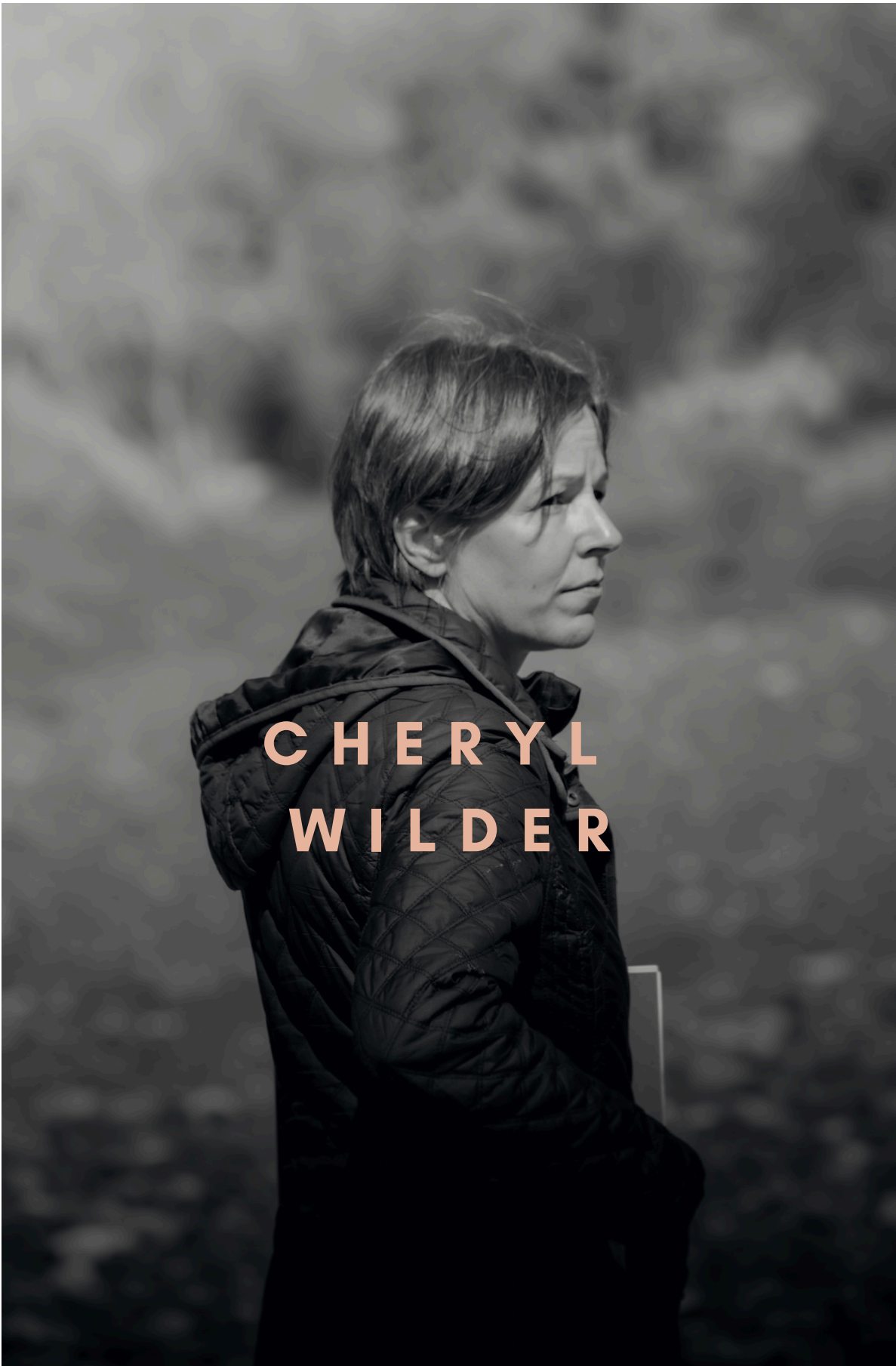


CHERYL WILDER



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WILDER

AUTHOR | SPEAKER | COACH

BORN WILDER

# Cheryl Wilder

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## BACKGROUNDER



Cheryl Wilder is an author, coach, and motivational speaker located in Haw River, North Carolina. Cheryl grew up in Northern California, before relocating to Wilmington, NC in her late teens. Shortly after she moved, Cheryl made a decision to drink and drive, resulting in a crash where the passenger, a close friend of Cheryl's, woke up from a coma four months later with a life-changing brain injury. In the year that followed, as Cheryl awaited trial, a journey of grief, remorse, and deep self-reflection, began. Cheryl was eventually sentenced to two years in prison and on appeal, spent fourteen days in jail, which she served on weekends. This is where she started a decades-long quest for inner peace, acceptance, and forgiveness. Cheryl now writes and speaks about her experience as the drunk driver in an accident with extreme consequences, and what the learning, healing, and personal growth journey entailed.

Cheryl's purpose is to share her experiences with shame and forgiveness, in hopes they will help others feel less alone as they battle similar feelings. She is a natural mediator and believer in the journey as a destination, which is evident in her writing and talks, as is her instinct to understand people, anticipate their needs, and listen to unvoiced questions. Cheryl is known for her passion for helping people see purpose and find connections in everyday occurrences.

In the writing arena of her life, Cheryl is on the board of the North Carolina Poetry Society, a community guide in the For Alamance Initiative, past president of the Burlington Writers Club and co-chair of their Student Writing Contest. She teaches writing workshops across the Southern region and has contributed to publications such as Barely South Review, Literary Mama, Verse Daily, and many others. Cheryl is the author of three books, with her latest, *Singing Riptide*, which is supported by the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts is a collection of poetry due to release in Summer 2025. In addition to shame and forgiveness, Cheryl's topics of proficiency include poetry and architecture, the value of community, and reinventing the self.

**Cheryl invites you to join her in living the life you aspire to.**



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## Speaking Topics

- Forgiving yourself for your role in a traumatic event
- Defining shame and forgiveness, and deconstructing the relationship between the two
- It's not the event, it's the aftermath that makes a life
- Self as Home
- Why community eclipses isolation
- Everything in life is a choice; the power of intentional decision-making
- Facing the fear of success (and failure)
- Rebuilding relationships with others and yourself during different life stages
- Healing from trauma through words; finding inner peace
- Holding two opposing feelings and beliefs
- Finding our purpose
- Moving forward in spite of internal monologue
- Healing in the aftermath of a traumatic event
- Consequences of drinking and driving

## Cheryl's Keynotes

### **Facing a Stone Mountain: Wherever You Go, There You Are**

During times of desolation, one word comes to our minds: escape. But why is it that when you attempt to leave a situation either physically or mentally, the same issues prevail? After Cheryl's accident, she realized that when the Big Thing you're running away from is YOU, there is only one pathway to recovery, and it's by embarking on an internal journey of forgiveness and self-acceptance.

### **The Power of Choices: Why Intentionality Matters**

Life is a series of choices. But, how do you make decisions with intention in your best interest, and in the best interest of others? And, does making a good decision mean that life feels good all the time? Cheryl deconstructs the craft of making some of life's biggest choices, and how to alleviate the pressures we put on ourselves along the way.