

The Seven Non-Negotiable Traits of a Leader Workbook

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Vulnerability

The Ultimate Strength

A. Session Outline

- My Story - "Do I have what it takes?"
- Brene Brown - Shame and Vulnerability
- Vulnerability and Leadership
- The Apostle Paul - 2 Corinthians 12:9

B. For Reflection

1. Finish these phrases with as many ideas as you can:
 - "I'm not _____ enough."
 - "I don't have what it takes to..."
2. Answer the question: Why am I afraid to tell you who I am? Think of as many reasons as you can.
3. What happens to me when I'm not transparent, open and vulnerable? What happens to me and God when I'm not vulnerable? What happens to me and others when I'm not vulnerable?
4. How do leaders who are vulnerable serve others? Why is vulnerability so important?
5. When have you been vulnerable and it was used against you? What other risks do you face in being vulnerable?

C. The Next Step

Each week we ask the two questions of discipleship. We are applying them here to leadership. As a result of watching the video, reflecting, doing additional study and debriefing: 1) What do you think God is telling you about vulnerability? And 2) What are you going to do about it?

Don't forget to set or affirm your plan and schedule for watching and debriefing the next video on Connectivity.

D. Additional Resources

Scriptures:

There are many scriptures where the Apostle Paul is extremely vulnerable. He models this very well. Read the following to get an idea of his amazing vulnerability as a leader:

[Romans 7:14-25](#)

[1 Corinthians. 2:1-5](#)

[1 Corinthians 4:1-13](#)

[2 Corinthians 6:3-13](#)

[2 Corinthians chapters 10-12.](#)

[2 Corinthians 12:9](#) - I subtitled this session "The Ultimate Strength." That comes from 1 Cor. 12:9 where God says to Paul - "my power is made perfect in weakness."

Books and/or Videos:

- [Patrick Lencioni - Getting Naked.](#)
While this is a business book about creating customer loyalty, the heart of the books is about the power and necessity of vulnerability and transparency in a work environment. Very helpful.
- [John Powell - Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?](#)
- [Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, Ken McElrath - The Ascent of a Leader](#) - Chapter 6 - Choosing Vulnerability.
- [Brene Brown - The Power of Vulnerability - TedTalks](#)
- [Brene Brown - Daring Greatly - How Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead.](#)
From the inside cover of the book *Daring Greatly* - *The phrase Daring Greatly is*

from Theodore Roosevelt's speech "[Citizenship in a Republic](#)." The speech, sometimes referred to as "The Man in the Arena," was delivered at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, on April 23, 1910. This is the passage that made the speech famous:

It's not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly . . . who at best knows the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.

The first time I read this quote, I thought, This is vulnerability. Everything I've learned from over a decade of research on vulnerability has taught me this exact lesson. Vulnerability is not knowing victory or defeat, it's understanding the necessity of both; it's engaging. It's being all in.

I think the first thing we have to do is figure out what's keeping us out of the arena. What's the fear? Where and why do we want to be braver? Then we have to figure out how we're currently protecting ourselves from vulnerability. What is our armor? Perfectionism? Intellectualizing? Cynicism? Numbing? Control? Respectability? That's where I started. It's not an easy walk into that arena, but it's where we come alive.

Article:

[Forbes April 21, 2013](#) - How Vulnerability Can Make Our Lives Better -

Vulnerability is basically uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure. I was raised in a "get 'er done" and "suck it up" family and culture (very Texan, German-American). The tenacity and grit part of that upbringing has served me, but I wasn't taught how to deal with uncertainty or how to manage emotional risk. I spent a lot of years trying to outrun or outsmart vulnerability by making things certain and definite, black and white, good and bad. My inability to lean into the discomfort of vulnerability limited the fullness of those important experiences that are wrought with uncertainty: Love, belonging, trust, joy, and creativity to name a few. Learning how to be vulnerable has been a street fight for me, but it's been worth it.

The difficult thing is that vulnerability is the first thing I look for in you and the last thing I'm willing to show you. In you, it's courage and daring. In me, it's weakness. This is where shame comes into play. Vulnerability is about showing up and being seen.

It's tough to do that when we're terrified about what people might see or think. When we're fueled by the fear of what other people think or that gremlin that's constantly whispering "You're not good enough" in our ear, it's tough to show up. We end up hustling for our worthiness rather than standing in it.