

## The Power of Vulnerability by Brene Brown (TED)

1. Dr. Brown makes this statement about relational connection: "**Connection is why we're here; it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives.**"

1. *Reflection...*

- a. Do you agree, or disagree?
    - b. Imagine what connection (or lack of) might mean to you in the last year of your life...
    - c. Consider the importance of personal connection in the following stages of your life. What would you say about your need, longing, and experience of connection in each stage? The beginning of your life...
      - i. Your childhood...
      - ii. Adolescence...
      - iii. Emerging Adulthood ...

2. In her research, Dr. Brown found **the thing that "unraveled connection" was shame**. She made the following statements about shame:

- a. Shame can be understood as the **fear of disconnection**; the fear that there is something about me that makes others consider me unworthy of connection.
  - b. **Shame is universal**. We all have it. The only people who don't experience shame have no capacity for human empathy or connection.
  - c. **No one wants to talk about shame**, and the less you talk about it, the more you have it.
  - d. **Shame is expressed in the feeling of "I'm not \_\_\_\_\_ enough"** (good enough, thin enough, rich enough, beautiful enough, smart enough, promoted enough, etc.).

1. *Reflection...*

- a. What were/are the things your fear most as a child, adolescent, emerging adult? (concrete and abstract)
      - b. Were any of those fears linked to thoughts of "I'm not \_\_\_\_\_ enough"? How did/do you fill in that blank?
      - c. How did/does this affect your relationship connections?

3. Dr. Brown's research indicated **what separated people who experience a strong sense of love and belonging from those who struggle for it is this: "The people who have a strong sense of love and belonging believe they're worthy of it."** When studying the data collected from these "wholehearted" people, she discovered they had these things in common:

- a. **Courage**: (Original definition: telling who you are with your whole heart.) They had the courage to be imperfect.
  - b. **Compassion**: They were kind to themselves and to others.
  - c. **Connection**: Their connections were rooted in authenticity (letting go of who they thought they should be in order to be who they were).
  - d. **Vulnerability**: They embraced vulnerability as something that was necessary for connection.



- d. I challenge you within the next 24 hours to act on your specific goal and write me a paragraph about your experience.



