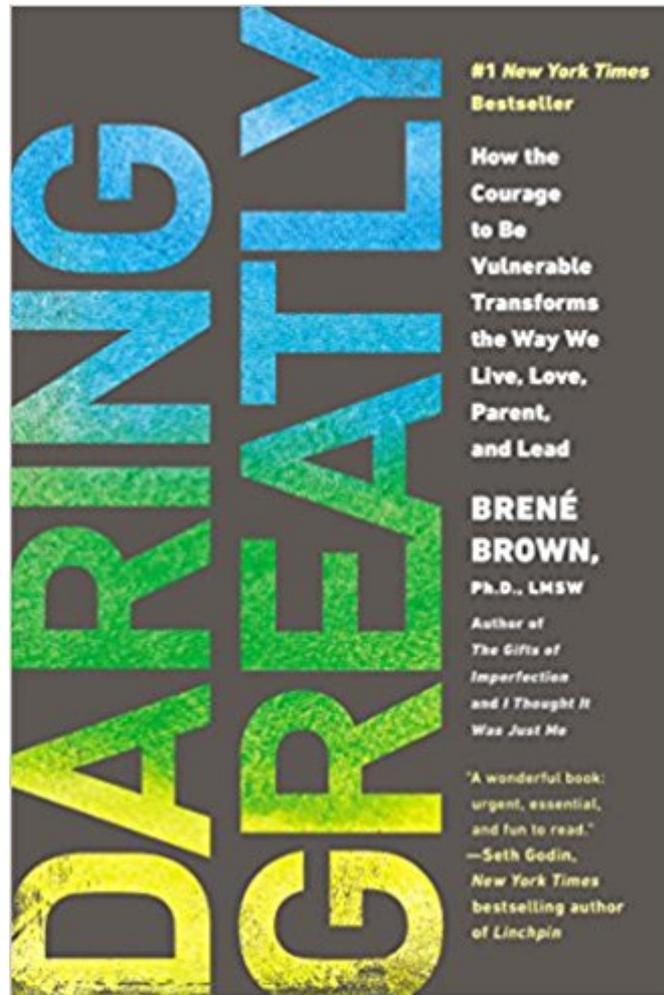


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# Daring Greatly: How The Courage To Be Vulnerable Transforms The Way We Live, Love, Parent, And Lead



## Synopsis

The #1 New York Times bestseller, now in paperback. From thought leader Dr. Brené Brown, a transformative new vision for the way we lead, love, work, parent, and educate that teaches us the power of vulnerability. It is 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 the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly. —Theodore Roosevelt

Every day we experience the uncertainty, risks, and emotional exposure that define what it means to be vulnerable or to dare greatly. Based on twelve years of pioneering research, Dr. Brené Brown dispels the cultural myth that vulnerability is weakness and argues that it is, in truth, our most accurate measure of courage. Brown explains how vulnerability is both the core of difficult emotions like fear, grief, and disappointment, and the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, empathy, innovation, and creativity. She writes: “When we shut ourselves off from vulnerability, we distance ourselves from the experiences that bring purpose and meaning to our lives.”

Daring Greatly is not about winning or losing. It’s about courage. In a world where “never enough” dominates and feeling afraid has become second nature, vulnerability is subversive. Uncomfortable. It’s even a little dangerous at times. And, without question, putting ourselves out there means there’s a far greater risk of getting criticized or feeling hurt. But when we step back and examine our lives, we will find that nothing is as uncomfortable, dangerous, and hurtful as standing on the outside of our lives looking in and wondering what it would be like if we had the courage to step into the arena—whether it’s a new relationship, an important meeting, the creative process, or a difficult family conversation. Daring Greatly is a practice and a powerful new vision for letting ourselves be seen.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Avery; Reprint edition (April 7, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1592408419

ISBN-13: 978-1592408412

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2,446 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #74 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in [Books > Self-Help > Relationships > Interpersonal Relations](#) #2 in [Books > Self-Help > Self-Esteem](#) #6 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling](#)

## Customer Reviews

Last week I was sitting outside a coffee shop reading a book on my kindle when a youngish guy walked by carrying a coffee and a computer, looking for a place to sit. Since all of the tables were occupied and he was looking a bit displaced, I offered him a seat at my table. Relieved, he sat down and expressed his gratitude. I promptly went back to my reading but I could feel his eyes boring into me as I anticipated the dreaded question. "What are you reading?" he finally blurted. Now I know this is neither a profound nor earth-shattering inquiry but there were two problems at hand here. One, I'm terrible at summarizing books. Just awful. (Which you're about to discover.) There's just something about the vast amount of information that I'm pressured to wrap into one or two sentences that completely overwhelms and paralyzes me. And two, I was reading a book about shame and vulnerability. Which ironically, I was ashamed to admit for fear of being vulnerable. Clearly, I had just started reading the book. Part of me was tempted to lie to youngish guy by replying, "oh, it's just some silly novel." But then it occurred to me how shameful it would be to lie about reading a book about shame and vulnerability instead of just being vulnerable. Besides, as I'm sure it's obvious--I could use the practice. "I'm reading *Daring Greatly* by Brené Brown. It's about shame and vulnerability and how shame can truly only dissipate by allowing yourself to be vulnerable", I quickly blurted. Allowing myself to be vulnerable led Patrick and I into a conversation for the next hour. Patrick, if you're reading this, *c'est une joie pour vous rencontrer*. (If this is wrong I blame Google translate.

"Vulnerability is not weakness," writes Brown. In fact, "Vulnerability is the the core, the heart, the center of meaningful human experiences." Without vulnerability, there can be no love, there can be no achievement, there can be no greatness. Unfortunately, instead of developing skills of vulnerability, we too frequently develop armoring techniques. We spend all our energy avoiding getting hurt, avoiding shame. But there's no surer way to not feel loved, not feel connected, not be fulfilled, than to practice the avoidance of vulnerability. Brown is a vulnerability researcher. She sees vulnerability as the prerequisite to living what she calls the "Wholehearted life." The Wholehearted life is one of deep attachment to others, our environment, and our work. It's a life of being "really

there," of being willing to fail. No one can avoid being actually vulnerable. We all are vulnerable every moment of our lives -- though some times more than others. But if we run from it, we lose. Here's how she breaks it down: 1. Love and belonging is an irreducible need. We all need it. 2. Those who feel a deep sense of love and belonging... feel loveable. They believe they are worthy of being loved. 3. A strong belief in our worthiness doesn't just happen. It must be cultivated. 4. The main concern of Wholehearted men and women is living a life defined by courage, compassion, and connection. 3. The Wholehearted identify vulnerability as the catalyst for courage, compassion, and connection. The willingness to be vulnerable is the single most important factor shared among the Wholehearted. It comes down to this: If we don't embrace vulnerability, we are destined to live a lonely, detached, unfulfilling life.

If you're not already familiar with Dr. Brown's work, you should definitely check out her three TED talks on Youtube or TED.com. Her videos are among the 10 most viewed TED talks of all time, and those will give you a great introduction to her work. I was able to obtain an advance copy of *Daring Greatly*, and have also read Dr. Brown's other two books and her clinical curriculum. *Daring Greatly* is, I think, her strongest work to-date. It breaks down the core elements of vulnerability (which is NOT weakness), and how allowing ourselves to be open and vulnerable opens us to levels of creativity, connection, and joy that we would never otherwise be able to find. It also covers her earlier works on shame and how shame (which all of us have, and the less we talk about it, the more we have it) impacts our ability to be open and vulnerable, but also how it can numb us and prevent us from being able to experience emotion fully. *Daring Greatly* (and all of Dr. Brown's work) is based entirely on her academic research; she states in the book that she is not comfortable talking about topics unless backed by solid research, and that's a refreshing change from most other authors in the self-help/pop psychology field. The book has appeal to multiple audiences; there are sections relating to vulnerability in the workplace, in relationships, in art, expression, and creativity, and, perhaps most importantly for many of us, in raising our children. Each chapter of the book builds on earlier chapters and makes a strong case for taking steps to be more open and vulnerable ourselves. It also speaks to the impact of numbing (the opposite of vulnerability) in popular culture, and the effect of social media, reality television, and other external influences on our self-numbing behaviors.

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