

1-Sentence-Summary: *Daring Greatly* is a book about having the courage to be vulnerable in a world where everyone wants to appear strong, confident and like they know what they're doing.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Daring Greatly sure was a surprise hit for me. First of all, if you don't know Brené Brown, she's a social worker, researcher, PhD and explorer of all things human, especially topics, or rather feelings, like courage, vulnerability and shame. Her TED talk sits smack behind Simon Sinek's Start With Why on the top TED talks of all time list with 25 million views.

This book, one of her three New York Times bestsellers, explains how vulnerability is at the core of all feelings – not just bad ones like fear, anxiety and shame, but also good ones like love, joy, and passion.

She says that we could all use a little more vulnerability in our lives, because it's neither bad nor good. It just is, and embracing it means being courageous.

Here are 3 lessons about vulnerability and how you can be courageous enough to step into it when you fear it the most:

1. Vulnerability means strength, not weakness.
2. Understand and verbalize your shame to make it go away.
3. Children can only become who you are, so be a role model.

Are you willing to open up and let this book into your life? I hope you are, because Brené's ideas are very powerful.

Lesson 1: If you can be vulnerable, it means you're strong.

First, Brené makes two core points about vulnerability.

1. **Vulnerability isn't good or bad.** It's not a black and white subject. It's just a part of life and if you experience it, it means you're able to feel things.
2. **Allowing yourself to actually be vulnerable is a sign of strength and courage.** It's a lot easier to avoid the things that might make you vulnerable, rather than lean into them. But that also means we're missing out on a lot of good things.

For example, if you've ever loved someone you know that being in love makes you *very* vulnerable. You allow someone into your heart and give them incredible power, which includes the power to hurt you. But only if you accept this state of vulnerability do you have a shot at all the love, joy and kindness you might experience from that relationship. This means vulnerability isn't just the source of pain and grief, but also the root of many positive emotions.

Note: I'm getting coffee with a girl I haven't really seen in six years today. I was in love with her in high school and it scares the shit out of me to see her again. But if I don't go I'll never know why, so my best bet is to go there, be vulnerable, show myself and see what's to come.

Second, you could hide from the things that make you vulnerable. The responsibility for a project at work. The girl or guy you haven't seen in forever. The art you want to create. But you know that's a cop out. Leaning into vulnerability is something only the strong, the truly courageous can do.

Lesson 2: Build a resilience to shame by understanding it and saying it out loud.

What's worse than completely bombing a speaking gig? Being ashamed about bombing a speaking gig and never doing one again.

There's a quote that goes "Failure is temporary, giving up is what makes it permanent." Shame is what makes you give up.

"I'm ashamed that I wasn't there for my son when he was little."

"I'm ashamed I didn't try harder at being a good wedding planner."

"I'm ashamed at work, because my co-workers talk about me behind my back."

Have you thought any of these? Or other variations? I bet you have. But have you *said* them? Try it. I just did this morning. There's a certain level of ridicule to be found in every single shame you express. **Pinpointing what actually makes you feel ashamed and saying it out loud takes a lot of power from shame.**

Nobody wants to talk about shame. It's uncomfortable. But the less you do, the more power it has. Instead, pull at it. Drag it out. Throw it into the light. And address it directly. You'll see things aren't as worrisome as they seem and that you can live past failure.

Lesson 3: Be a role model for your (future) kids, it's the only way they learn.

Whether you have kids or not, I thought this was worth taking away. **Your children can only inherit qualities you possess yourself.**

If you're sloppy, your children will be sloppy. If you're organized, your children will be organized. And if you're constantly shame-ridden, you'll traumatize your kids by making them feel the same.

If you've been bullied, threatened or otherwise traumatized as a kid, you know that most childhood trauma comes from shame. Shame about an event, behavior, or even just about how others have treated us.

Therefore, it's your job to make your home and family a shame-free zone. It's the only way your kids will grow up feeling worthy, loved and able to truly be themselves.

Instead of talking about values like honesty, courage and ambition, live them. Be honest. Be courageous. Be ambitious. The best thing you can do for your kids, born or not, is to be a role model. It's all the parenting they need.

Daring Greatly Review

I think the reason Brené's TED talk and work responds with so many people is that she went through all of the struggles she describes herself. When she first discovered that vulnerability was at the core of any life, especially any good life – she broke down. Researchers and scientists aren't exactly out to be vulnerable. They're trying to measure things so they can predict the future better. That's quite the opposite, so it took some time for her to deal with this new situation and data.

You can feel that in her talks and writing. She's not a bullshit artist. She's seen the dark side. And she's here to tell us not only that we have to do too, but that we can and that it'll be okay.

A wonderful person to learn from. I highly recommended *Daring Greatly*.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

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- The true definition of fear and why it's harmful to us
 - Why shame is part of our modern culture rat race
 - How to improve your relationships by being vulnerable
 - What you can do to stop hiding your vulnerability
 - How shame poisons workplaces, schools and families
 - Why leaders should encourage vulnerability

Who would I recommend the Daring Greatly summary to?

The 15 year old, shy schoolboy, who's being bullied, the 25 year old mother of this boy, and anyone who never talks about what they're ashamed of.