CHAPTER ONE

Closing the disengagement divide

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, Brené Brown emphasizes the importance of bridging the gap between our aspirational values and our practiced values. She argues that disengagement is a prevalent issue rooted in the fear of vulnerability and shame, affecting our families, organizations, and communities. The chapter outlines how culture shapes behavior and highlights ten probing questions to reveal the discrepancies between values and actions. Brown discusses the vital role of leaders in modeling aligned values to cultivate engagement. Ultimately, the chapter calls for a commitment to recognizing and addressing these gaps in our lives.

Minding the Gap is Essential

To cultivate true change in our lives, we must pay attention to the space between our current reality and where we aspire to be. This journey requires embracing our vulnerability and building resilience against shame. It's not about perfection, but about commitment and engagement.

"Minding the gap is a daring strategy."

The Debate: Strategy vs Culture

In discussions about organizational effectiveness, the debate between strategy and culture often emerges. Strategies determine our game plan for success, while culture defines who we are. In practice, culture often prevails as the foundation for lasting success.

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast."

Culture: The Way We Do Things

Culture is integral in shaping behaviors and attitudes within organizations and families. Understanding how values are practiced helps illuminate discrepancies between what we claim to value and our actual behaviors. This awareness is key to closing the disengagement gap.

Identifying Cultural Values

Engaging with the underlying values of a group involves reflective questioning. This includes exploring how rewards and punishments shape behavior and whether individuals feel safe expressing their thoughts and needs. These inquiries can surface valuable insights.

The Disengagement Challenge

Disengagement often arises from a disconnect between leaders' actions and their espoused values. This rift causes individuals to protect themselves through disengagement, but understanding and addressing this divide is essential for fostering connection.

Consequences of Value Gaps

Value gaps create disengagement, leading to disconnection within families and organizations. We lose valuable relationships and trust when our actionable values do not align with our aspirational ones. Awareness of these gaps must be part of our transformative journey.

Real-Life Examples of Disengagement

Brown shares poignant examples illustrating the gap between aspirational and practiced values within families. Real-life conflicts highlight how inconsistencies undermine trust and connection, illustrating the need for open dialogues about values.

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The Path Forward

To navigate the disengagement divide, we must model our values authentically, even in moments of imperfection. Engaging in honest conversations about our shortcomings provides opportunities for growth and deeper connections.

Next Steps: Cultivating Engagement
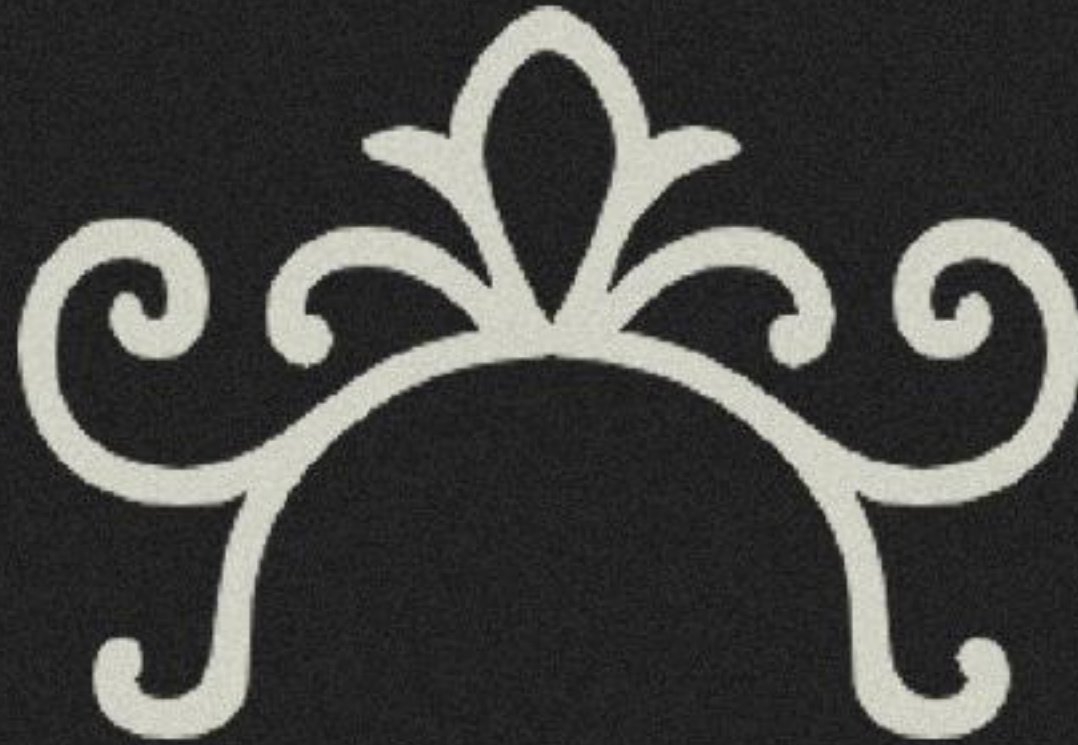
The chapter concludes by emphasizing the importance of daring strategies that promote engaged cultures. As we face our own gremlins, we must remain committed to practicing and aligning our values, creating spaces for meaningful connection.

Recap

- "Minding the gap is a daring strategy."

- "Culture eats strategy for breakfast."

- "Disengagement is the issue underlying many societal problems."

- "The space between our practiced and aspirational values is critical."

- "Are we walking our talk?"

Thank You

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