

# Brené Brown, Ph.D., LMSW

## About Brené

Dr. Brené Brown is a professor and vulnerability researcher at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work. Because vulnerability is the core of many thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, her research topics cover a broad range of emotions and experiences, including shame, fear, courage, authenticity, joy, love, belonging, innovation, and accountability. Brené's work also examines how vulnerability shapes the way we live, love, parent, work, lead organizations, and build communities.

Brené is an award-winning teacher and her work has been featured on PBS, NPR, and the Oprah and Friends Radio Network. Last year, Brené was named one of "The 50 Most Influential Women of 2009" by Houston Women Magazine. Brené's latest theory based on her vulnerability research, Wholehearted Living, was the topic of two recent TEDx talks.



“Business leaders have access to more research and information on how to achieve success than ever before, yet we still struggle with the same issues: Trust, accountability, innovation, creativity, authenticity. Why? *Because data and “how-to” are not enough.*”

We need to have honest conversations about what it takes to bring our best, most authentic selves to work, and how to effectively encourage our colleagues to do the same. We need to understand the human side of cultivating an organizational culture where people feel inspired and supported. These conversations may sound risky and vulnerable, but risk and vulnerability are essential to courageous leadership. Real change and innovation are within our reach if we're willing to talk about the emotions, thoughts, and behaviors that get in the way.”

~ Brené Brown

## Speaking

Brené's reputation as a speaker is built on her ability to explore difficult topics with tremendous honesty, warmth, and humor. She is a thought-leader, researcher, and storyteller with the rare ability to both inspire audiences and leave them with actionable change strategies.

After moderating a national series of lectures given by Brené, Dr. Karen Casey had this to say about her work:

*“Brené is uniquely capable of blending research, humor, and storytelling in a way that captures the hearts and minds of her audience. Her work and the way she puts words to our unspoken experiences changes people's lives.”*

## What people are saying...

“The world is full of good corporate speakers, but if you miss the opportunity to have Brené Brown speak to your executive team, you will miss something unique, amazing, and powerful. Brené led our Executive Forum in a forward-thinking and powerful presentation that challenged executives to think differently and act boldly. Today's corporate leader needs this kind of personal authenticity if they are to meet the growing challenge of corporate transparency. Brené brings this message to the table with commanding charisma.”

~ Karl E. Hansen, CEO and Rae Lee Olson, COO, *The Vita Companies*

“Brené's research on connection, empathy, and vulnerability in the workplace helped us better understand how the emotional consequences of change play out in the workplace, and how to more effectively engage with one another.

She delivers a critically important message that is supported by original research and does so in an engaging and intelligent way. Leaders at all levels of the organization came away with a new framework for looking at these issues and making effective changes to how we lead.”

~ Elaine DeCanio, *Shell Oil Company*

“Out of the sixteen internationally renowned writers, scientists, and business experts speaking that day, our audience rated Brené's presentation as one of the top two. Not only was Brené informative and thought-provoking, but her willingness to talk about the parts of our lives we rarely discuss was profoundly honest. She is extremely knowledgeable, inspiring, and relatable. She offered our audiences a very real look into the powerful emotions that affect every aspect of our lives.”

~Sheryl W. Rapp, Co-Founder, *The UP Experience*

## Current Topics

### **The Inspirational Leader: Why Courage, Authenticity, and Calm Matter**

From developing talent and connecting with consumers, to building brands and fostering innovative cultures, inspiration is critical. Inspirational leadership is not about job titles and roles – it’s a style of leadership available to anyone who is willing to practice courage in the midst of fear, to choose authenticity over self-protection, and to foster calm in times of high reactivity.

### **The Power of Vulnerability**

In our culture, vulnerability has become synonymous with weakness. We associate vulnerability with emotions like fear, shame, and scarcity; emotions that we don’t want to discuss, even when they profoundly affect the way we live, work, and even lead.

To reduce our feelings of vulnerability, we wake up every morning, put on our game face, and rarely take it off – especially at the office. We use invulnerability as a shield to protect us from uncomfortable emotions and struggles with anxiety and self-doubt. But invulnerability has a price.

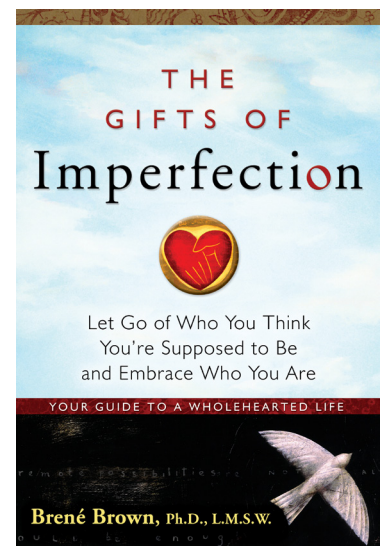
Vulnerability is indeed at the core of difficult emotions, but it is also the birthplace of: Creativity and innovation, authenticity, adaptability to change and accountability – the key elements that every business needs to survive and thrive.

### **Great Expectations: What Leaders and Managers Need to Understand about Goals**

Setting, tracking, and celebrating goals are primary tasks in business; however, very few managers and leaders understand the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral anatomy of the goal process. Understanding the loaded dynamics of expectations, disappointments, and accomplishments gives us more tools for cultivating success with our own goals and becoming more effective mentors for our employees.

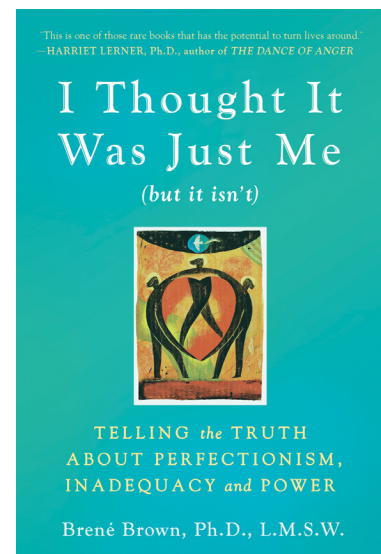
### **The Only Constant is Change: Developing Courage, Compassion and Connection in Overstressed and Anxious Organizations**

For organizations to successfully navigate change, it is imperative that employees at all levels bring their best selves to work. But too often leaders and managers don’t know how to navigate the emotional landscape of change – especially the human response to stress, anxiety, and fear. Unknowingly, leadership often incites the exact behaviors that sabotage the creativity, trust, and accountability that are essential to managing change.



“Brené Brown courageously tackles the dark emotions that get in the way of leading a fuller life; read this book and let some of that courage rub off on you.”

*Daniel H. Pink,  
New York Times best-selling author  
of A Whole New Mind*



“This book is an urgent and compelling invitation to examine our struggles with shame and to learn valuable tools to become our best, most authentic selves. Grounded in exceptional scholarship and filled with inspiring stories, this is one of those rare books that has the potential to turn lives around.”

*Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.  
New York Times best-selling author  
of The Dance of Connection*