

Your Kindle Notes For:



The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are

Brené Brown

75 Highlight(s) | 0 Note(s)

Location: 56

One reason it's impossible to un-see trends is that our minds are engineered to seek out patterns and to assign meaning to them. Humans are a meaning-making species. And, for better or worse, my mind is actually fine-tuned to do this.

Location: 112

People may call what happens at midlife “a crisis,” but it’s not. It’s an unraveling—a time when you feel a desperate pull to live the life you want to live, not the one you’re “supposed” to live. The unraveling is a time when you are challenged by the universe to let go of who you think you are supposed to be and to embrace who you are.

Location: 117

The universe is not short on wake-up calls. We’re just quick to hit the snooze button.

Location: 140

I now see that cultivating a Wholehearted life is not like trying to reach a destination. It’s like walking toward a star in the sky. We never really arrive, but we certainly know that we’re heading in the right direction.

Location: 214

Rather, I prayerfully, intentionally, and thoughtfully did something restorative.

Location: 228

Compassion is something we all want, but are we willing to look at why boundary-setting and saying no is a critical component of compassion? Are we willing to say no, even if we're disappointing someone? Belonging is an essential component of Wholehearted living, but first we have to cultivate self-acceptance—why is this such a struggle?

Blue highlight | Location: 231

“Why is this book worth writing? What’s the contribution that I’m hoping to make?”

Location: 239

Owning our story can be hard but not nearly as difficult as spending our lives running from it.

Location: 289

The most dangerous thing to do after a shaming experience is hide or bury our story. When we bury our story, the shame metastasizes. I remember saying out loud: “I need to talk to someone RIGHT NOW. Be brave, Brené!”

Location: 310

When we're looking for compassion, it's about connecting with the right person at the right time about the right issue.

Location: 334

The root of the word courage is cor—the Latin word for heart. In one of its earliest forms, the word courage had a very different definition than it does today. Courage originally meant “To speak one’s mind by telling all one’s heart.” Over time, this definition has changed, and, today, courage is more synonymous with being heroic.

Location: 339

Heroics is often about putting our life on the line. Ordinary courage is about putting our vulnerability on the line. In today’s world, that’s pretty extraordinary.¹

Location: 405

Compassionate people are boundaried people.

Location: 433

It’s hard for us to understand that we can be compassionate and accepting while we hold people accountable for their behaviors.

Location: 435

The key is to separate people from their behaviors—to address what they're doing, not who they are.

Location: 444

I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.

Location: 460

In our technology-crazed world, we've confused being communicative with feeling connected.

Location: 476

If connection is the energy that surges between people, we have to remember that those surges must travel in both directions.

Location: 501

Here's what is truly at the heart of Wholeheartedness: Worthy now. Not if. Not when. We are worthy of love and belonging now. Right this minute. As is.

Location: 512

Most of us like safety, certainty, and clarity. Shame and love are grounded in vulnerability and tenderness.

Location: 517

Fitting in is about assessing a situation and becoming who you need to be to be accepted. Belonging, on the other hand, doesn't require us to change who we are; it requires us to be who we are.

Location: 523

Love belongs with belonging. One of the most surprising things that unfolded in my research is the pairing of certain terms. I can't separate the concepts of love and belonging because when people spoke of one, they always talked about the other.

Location: 564

When we don't practice love with the people we claim to love, it takes a lot out of us. Incongruent living is exhausting.

Location: 667

I'm not about the "how-to" because in ten years, I've never seen any evidence of "how-to" working without talking about the things that get in the way.

Location: 673

If we really want to live a joyful, connected, and meaningful life, we must talk about things that get in the way.

Location: 695

Why? We have more access to information, more books, and more good science—why are we struggling like never before? Because we don't talk about the things that get in the way of doing what we know is best for us, our children, our families, our organizations, and our communities.

Location: 726

Shame is basically the fear of being unlovable—it's the total opposite of owning our story and feeling worthy.

Location: 727

the definition of shame that I developed from my research is: Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging.¹

Location: 766

Shame is about who we are, and guilt is about our behaviors. We feel guilty when we hold up something we've done or failed to do against the kind of person we want to be.

Location: 777

Using shame to parent teaches children that they are not inherently worthy of love.

Location: 852

Shame is a full-contact emotion. Men and women with high levels of shame resilience know when shame is happening. The easiest way to know shame is to cultivate an awareness of our physical shame symptoms.

Location: 881

I realized that, like many desirable ways of being, authenticity is not something we have or don't have. It's a practice—a conscious choice of how we want to live.

Location: 892

What are the parts that come together to create an authentic self? Here's what I developed: Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go of who we think we're supposed to be and embracing who we are. Choosing authenticity means cultivating the courage to be imperfect, to set boundaries, and to allow ourselves to be vulnerable; exercising the compassion that comes from knowing that we are all made of strength and struggle; and nurturing the connection and sense of belonging that can only happen when we believe that we are enough.

Location: 919

I found that speaking out is a major shame trigger for women. Here's how the research participants described the struggle to be authentic: Don't make people feel uncomfortable but be honest. Don't upset anyone or hurt anyone's feelings but say what's on your mind. Sound informed and educated but not like a know-it-all. Don't say anything unpopular or controversial but have the courage to disagree with the crowd.

Location: 943

Sacrificing who we are for the sake of what other people think just isn't worth it. Yes, there can be authenticity growing pains for the people around us, but in the end, being true to ourselves is the best gift we can give the people we love. When I let go of trying to be everything to everyone, I had much more time, attention, love, and connection for the important people in my life.

Blue highlight | Location: 948

DIG Deep Get Deliberate:

Blue highlight | Location: 952

Get Inspired:

Blue highlight | Location: 954

Get Going:

Location: 987

Healthy striving is self-focused—How can I improve? Perfectionism is other-focused—What will they think?

Location: 1,056

Perfectionism never happens in a vacuum. It touches everyone around us. We pass it down to our children, we infect our workplace with impossible expectations, and it's suffocating for our friends and families.

Location: 1,072

Get Going: Sometimes it helps me to wake up in the morning and tell myself, "Today, I'm going to believe that showing up is enough."

Location: 1,092

here are five of the most common factors of resilient people:

Location: 1,118

I was shocked to discover that hope is not an emotion; it's a way of thinking or a cognitive process. Emotions play a supporting role, but hope is really a thought process made up of what Snyder calls a trilogy of goals, pathways, and agency.⁴ In very simple terms, hope happens when we have the ability to set realistic goals. (I know where I want to go.) We are able to figure out how to achieve those goals, including the ability to stay flexible and develop alternative routes. (I know how to get there, I'm persistent, and I can tolerate disappointment and try again.) We believe in ourselves. (I can do this!)

Location: 1,130

The new cultural belief that everything should be fun, fast, and easy is inconsistent with hopeful thinking. It also sets us up for hopelessness. When we experience something that is difficult and requires significant time and effort, we are quick to think, This is supposed to be easy; it's not worth the effort, or, This should be easier: it's only hard and slow because I'm not good at it. Hopeful self-talk sounds more like, This is tough, but I can do it.

Location: 1,146

The best definition of power comes from Martin Luther King Jr. He described power as the ability to effect change. If we question our need for power, think about this: How do you feel when you believe that you are powerless to change something in your life?

Location: 1,155

It's in our biology to trust what we see with our eyes. This makes living in a carefully edited, overproduced, and Photoshopped world very dangerous.

Location: 1,242

When we lose our tolerance for discomfort, we lose joy. In fact, addiction research shows us that an intensely positive experience is as likely to cause relapse as an intensely painful experience.⁸

Location: 1,251

Is spirituality a necessary component for resilience? The answer is yes.

Location: 1,262

it! It's called the vowel check: AEIOUY. A = Have I been Abstinent today? (However you define that—I find it a little more challenging when it comes to things like food, work, and the computer.) E = Have I Exercised today? I = What have I done for myself today?

Location: 1,264

O = What have I done for Others today? U = Am I holding on to Unexpressed emotions today?
Y = Yeah! What is something good that's happened today?

Blue highlight | Location: 1,267

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross: "People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

Location: 1,397

Author and spiritual leader Marianne Williamson says, "Joy is what happens to us when we allow ourselves to recognize how good things really are."

Location: 1,422

Intuition is not independent of any reasoning process. In fact, psychologists believe that intuition is a rapid-fire, unconscious associating process—like a mental puzzle.² The brain makes an observation, scans its files, and matches the observation with existing memories, knowledge, and experiences. Once it puts together a series of matches, we get a "gut" on what we've observed.

Location: 1,536

"I'm not very creative" doesn't work. There's no such thing as creative people and non-creative people. There are only people who use their creativity and people who don't. Unused creativity doesn't just disappear. It lives within us until it's expressed, neglected to death, or suffocated by resentment and fear.

Location: 1,577

It's play! A critically important component of Wholehearted living is play!

Location: 1,581

Dr. Stuart Brown. Dr. Brown is a psychiatrist, clinical researcher, and founder of the National Institute for Play. He is also the author of a wonderful book titled, *Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*.¹

Location: 1,596

But Brown argues that play is not an option. In fact he writes, “The opposite of play is not work—the opposite of play is depression.” He explains, “Respecting our biologically programmed need for play can transform work. It can bring back excitement and newness to our job. Play helps us deal with difficulties, provides a sense of expansiveness, promotes mastery of our craft, and is an essential part of the creative process. Most important, true play that comes from our own inner needs and desires is the only path to finding lasting joy and satisfaction in our work. In the long run, work does not work without play.”²

Location: 1,622

When we compared our dream list to our “joy and meaning” list, we realized that by merely letting go of the list of things we want to accomplish and acquire, we would be actually living our dream—not striving to make it happen in the future, but living it right now. The things we were working toward did nothing in terms of making our life fuller.

Location: 1,639

I guess the answer to this is only yes if it counts to us. If what matters to us is what we’re concerned about, then play and rest is important. If what matters to us is what other people think or say or value, then it’s back to exhaustion and producing for self-worth. Today, I choose play and rest.

Blue highlight | Location: 1,646

Get Inspired: I’m continually inspired by Stuart Brown’s work on play and Daniel Pink’s book *A Whole New Mind*.⁴ If you want to learn more about the importance of play and rest, read these books.

Location: 1,667

That silence thing can be effective. It’s a pain in the ass, but nonetheless effective.

Location: 1,672

I define calm as creating perspective and mindfulness while managing emotional reactivity. When I think about calm people, I think about people who can bring perspective to complicated situations and feel their feelings without reacting to heightened emotions like fear and anger.

Location: 1,682

As psychologist and writer Harriet Lerner says, “Anxiety is extremely contagious, but so is calm.”²

Location: 1,694

Sometimes I actually think to myself, I’m dying to freak out here! Do I have enough information to freak out? Will freaking out help? The answer is always no.

Location: 1,706

Stillness is not about focusing on nothingness; it's about creating a clearing. It's opening up an emotionally clutter-free space and allowing ourselves to feel and think and dream and question.

Location: 1,712

Of course, the irony is that the thing that's wearing us down is trying to stay out in front of feeling worn down. This is the self-perpetuating quality of anxiety. It feeds on itself. I often say that when they start having Twelve Step meetings for busy-aholics, they'll need to rent out football stadiums.

Location: 1,733

Get Going: Experiment with different forms of still and quiet. We all need to find something that works for us. To be honest, I'm never more open and emotionally clutter-free than when I'm walking alone outside. It's not technically still, but it's an emotional opening for me.

Location: 1,759

God lives within us, not above us. Sharing our gifts and talents with the world is the most powerful source of connection with God.

Location: 1,801

theologian Howard Thurman

Location: 1,802

the importance of meaningful work, it's taken on new significance: "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

Location: 1,815

think about doing something you love. There's nothing that says you have to quit your day job to cultivate meaningful work. There's also nothing that says your day job isn't meaningful work—maybe you've just never thought of it that way.

Location: 1,840

After a couple of years of analyzing my data, here's what I learned: Laughter, song, and dance create emotional and spiritual connection; they remind us of the one thing that truly matters when we are searching for comfort, celebration, inspiration, or healing: We are not alone.

Location: 1,878

The only true currency in this bankrupt world is what you share with someone else when you're uncool. ~ A QUOTE FROM THE FILM ALMOST FAMOUS, 2000

Location: 1,926

The Hopi Indians have a saying, "To watch us dance is to hear our hearts speak." I know how much courage it takes to let people hear our hearts speak, but life is way too precious to spend it pretending like we're super-cool and totally in control when we could be laughing, singing, and dancing.

Location: 1,941

The truth is that meaningful change is a process. It can be uncomfortable and is often risky, especially when we're talking about embracing our imperfections, cultivating authenticity, and looking the world in the eye and saying, "I am enough."