

USG SGM ~ The Path of Vulnerability ~ March, 2023

drawn from Soul Matters materials, see the full packet for more of all of these elements

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Chalice Lighting

Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability and authenticity. [Brené Brown](#)

Check-in *Share your highs and lows since we last met focusing on what drains you and what lifts you up. We give each other the gift of listening without asking questions or offering advice to allow people the safety to share what's in their hearts.*

Introduction

It may be that when we no longer know what to do
we have come to our real work,
and that when we no longer know which way to go
we have come to our real journey.

The mind that is not baffled is not employed.

The impeded stream is the one that sings. ~ Wendell Berry

Spiritual Exercise: Questioning Courage & Vulnerability Culture

Led by the widely read and widely celebrated Brene Brown, "courage & vulnerability culture" has become the unquestioned frame of reference for vast swaths of the self-help, research and therapeutic communities. But maybe a bit of questioning is needed. Spend some time this month with some important questioners and their appeal for us to take another - and more careful - look. Here are three of the voices we suggest:

- [The Dangers of Courage Culture and Why Brene Brown Isn't for Black Folk, Dr. Carey Yazeed](#)
<https://drcareyyazeed.com/the-dangers-of-courage-culture-and-why-brene-brown-isnt-for-black-folk/>
- [Is vulnerability a privilege? Jeff Couillard](#)
<https://www.powerandmeaning.com/is-vulnerability-a-privilege/>
- [The Risks & Dangers of Brene Brown's Vulnerability for People of Color - Different People Podcast](#)
<https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/the-risks-dangers-of-brene-browns-vulnerability/id1504970545?i=1000547998215>

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

Heartbreak is the beautifully helpless side of love and affection. [David Whyte](#)

I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain. James Baldwin

It is an act of resistance in our culture to say: everyone needs care at different points in their life and everyone provides care to others. [rev emilie boggis](#)

One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone. Shannon L. Alder

The difficult thing is that vulnerability is the first thing I look for in you and the last thing I'm willing to show you. In you, it's courage and daring. In me, it's weakness. Brene Brown

Just because I'm feeling vulnerable doesn't mean I am vulnerable... Often my feeling of vulnerability has much more to do with events from my past than it does with what's happening now. Rev Megan Foley

Self-revelation is the most vulnerable-making thing of which human beings are capable, and yet in that vulnerability we find our deepest freedom. [Maria Popova](#)

Faith minus vulnerability and mystery equals extremism. If you've got all the answers, then don't call what you do 'faith.' Brene Brown

Questions *Pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out what being on the path of vulnerability means for you and your daily living.*

1. How would your life be different if you had trusted in vulnerability earlier in life?
2. What has life taught you about leaps of faith and leaping into the unknown?
3. Are you tired of pretending that you are strong?
4. Has vulnerability gotten easier or harder as you've grown older?
5. What is your favorite failure? i.e., which of your failures ended up leading to unexpected success or to a gift?
6. Has a past betrayal ever left you more protective than you need to be?

Sitting in Silence *Take a few moments to sit quietly and reflect upon your thoughts.*

Sharing/Deep Listening *Respond with your thoughts and experiences with the topic. We create a safe space by listening deeply and not responding. When sharing, connect with what is true for you. When listening, give the speaker your full attention rather than thinking about what you will share.*

Reflection and Gratitude *This is a time to respond briefly to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared. Consider lifting up one comment or experience for which you are particularly grateful.*

Singing (or watching a video of someone else singing)

Click [here](#) for the Spotify playlist on [Vulnerability](#).

Click [here](#) for the YouTube playlist on [Vulnerability](#).

Extinguishing the Chalice

The secret of vulnerability is not everyone is meant to know. Practice a sacred withholding. Stop giving all of you away. Cole Arthur Riley