

[Brene Brown's Dare To Lead](#)

Book Summary by Justine Cooper, January 2020

I define a Leader as: anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential. We need braver leaders and more courageous cultures.

10 behaviours and cultural issues that leaders identified as getting in our way in organisations across the world:

1. We avoid tough conversations, including giving honest, productive feedback
2. We spend an unreasonable amount of time managing problematic behaviours – as opposed to addressing the fears and feelings through change
3. A lack of connection and empathy diminishes trust
4. Not enough people are taking smart risks, creating/sharing bold ideas to meet changing demands
5. We get stuck and defined by setbacks and failures
6. Too much shame and blame, not enough accountability and learning
7. **People are opting out of vital conversations about diversity and inclusivity because they fear looking/saying something wrong. Choosing our own comfort over hard conversations is the epitome of privilege, and it corrodes trust and moves us away from meaningful and lasting change**
8. When something goes wrong, people rush into ineffective solutions rather than staying with problem identification and solving
9. Organisational values are described in terms of aspirations rather than actual behaviours that can be taught, measured and evaluated
10. Perfectionism and fear are keeping people away from learning and growing

Daring Leadership Principles:

- **Rumbling with Vulnerability:** You can't get to courage without rumbling with vulnerability. A rumble is a conversation defined by a commitment to lean into vulnerability, to stay curious and generous, to stick with the chaos of problem identification and solving, to be fearless in owning our accountability and to listen with the same passion with which we want to be heard. Vulnerability is the emotion that we experience during times of uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure. Courage is a collection of 4 skills sets:
 - Rumbling with Vulnerability
 - Living into our Values (in our experience only 10% of organisations have operationalised their values in to teachable behaviours that are used to train their employees and hold them accountable)
 - Braving Trust
 - Learning to Rise
- **Self awareness and self-love matter:** who we are is how we lead
- **Courage is contagious:** we have to cultivate a culture in which brave work, tough conversations, and whole hearts are the expectations

"Bringing Your Whole Self to Work": the slogan is easy, the behaviours to support the slogan are not

Armoured Leadership	Daring Leadership
Driving Perfectionism and Fostering Fear of Failure	Modelling and encouraging empathy, clarity, kindness, hope and self-compassion
Working from scarcity and squandering opportunities for joy and recognition	Practicing gratitude and celebrating milestones
Being right	Being a learner
Competing	Practising integration: strong back, soft front, wild heart (integration of ourselves, being transparent)
Self protection	Making contributions and taking risks
Leading for compliance and control	Cultivating commitment and shared purpose
Weaponising fear and uncertainty	Acknowledging, naming and normalising collective fear and uncertainty
Rewarding exhaustion as a status symbol	Modelling and supporting rest, play and recovery
Tolerating discrimination and a 'fitting-in' culture	Cultivating a culture of belonging, inclusivity and diverse perspectives
Avoiding and zig zagging	Straight talking and taking action
Leading from hurt	Leading from the heart

This is an adapted extract from the full table of 32 research findings under armoured and daring leadership

Empathy is not connecting to an experience, it's connecting to the emotions that underpin an experience. Empathy skills:

1. See the world as others see it – perspective taking. Only when diverse perspectives are included, respected and valued can we start to get a full picture of the world and how to meet people where they are
2. Be non-judgemental
3. Understand another person's feelings
4. Communicate your understanding of that person's feelings
5. Mindfulness: taking a balanced approach to negative emotions so that we do not over identify with thoughts and feelings

Curiosity is an act of vulnerability and courage

From our research on Trust, we developed 7 behaviours, in the acronym BRAVING:

Boundaries: mutual respect, we ask for help and are willing to say no

Reliability: you do what you say you'll do, you don't overpromise and deliver on commitments

Accountability: you own your mistakes, apologise and make amends

Vault: you don't share information that is not yours to share

Integrity: you choose courage over comfort

Nonjudgement: we can ask each other for help without judgement

Generosity: you extend the most generous interpretation to the intentions, words and actions of others

Learning To Rise process is about growing from our failures. When we have the courage to walk into our own story and own it, we get to write the ending. When we don't own our stories of failure, setbacks and hurt -they own us.

- The Reckoning: this is being honest about the story I'm telling myself, with myself and others
- The Rumble Process: is facilitated through each of the following steps:
 - Set the Intent
 - What does everyone need to engage in this process with an open heart and mind
 - What will get in the way of you showing up
 - Commit to showing up
 - Sharing permissions
 - What emotions are people experiencing
 - What do we need to get curious about
 - What are your first thoughts
 - What can we learn from these first thoughts: what's working and what's not working
 - Where do we need to rumble
 - What's the gap between these first thoughts and what new information we're gathering in this conversation
 - What are the key learnings
 - How do we act on the key learnings
 - How do we integrate these key learnings in to the culture. What is the 1 thing each of us will take responsibility for
 - When are we regrouping