

# Hidden secret to success: vulnerability

**S**TRENGTH AND overconfidence are often celebrated as traits for getting ahead, but vulnerability may play an equally important role. Dr. Brené Brown, author of *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead*, has studied vulnerability and shame at the University of Houston. Here's why she says vulnerability is a virtue.

**It brings change.** "Vulnerability is about being all in," Brown says.

"It's a willingness to show up, be seen and take chances." Brown spoke to parents, athletes, business leaders and others about their most meaningful accomplishments, and all talked about not knowing how things would turn out. "Vulnerability comes down to risking failure and risking being disappointed" for the possibility of great reward.

**It's everywhere.** Being vulnerable even plays a role in something like crisis management. Those who say they don't have vulnerabilities are missing the point, says Jonathan Bernstein of Bernstein Crisis Management. "They are more likely to have a crisis they could have prevented, or when they do have [one], it lingers."

**Great risk = great reward.**



**It reduces regret.** "Admit that vulnerability is scary," Brown says "but know that nothing is more unsafe than looking back and saying, 'What could have been if I had the courage to show up?'"

— Cheryl Alkon