

# INSIGHTS FROM THE GIFTS OF IMPERFECTION BY BRENÉ BROWN

## WHOLEHEARTED LIVING

Brené defines wholehearted living as “*engaging in our lives from a place of worthiness.*” It is a process, a daily practice. This way of life is based in your belief in your own worthiness in this moment—without any prerequisites. It is to nurture and grow our love, and to belong to something larger than us. Wholehearted living is daring—the choice to counter today’s culture.

## THESE GIFTS ARE RARELY TALKED ABOUT... YET ARE THE TOOLS NEEDED TO LIVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY.

**COURAGE:** Courage requires vulnerability. Ordinary everyday courage can be found if we pay attention and has a wide ripple effect.

**COMPASSION:** Compassion is to accept suffering as equals without resentment. Compassionate individuals are boundary-conscious.

**CONNECTION:** Connection happens when “*energy exists between people.*” This energy is grounded in feeling valued and is without judgment.

**WHY ARE COURAGE, COMPASSION AND CONNECTION NOT COMMON PRACTICE?** They take more time and energy than shaming and blaming.

“We have to own our story and share it with someone who has earned the right to hear it, someone whom we can count on to respond with compassion.” p.9

## WHAT CAN GET IN THE WAY

**THE WORK IS UNCOMFORTABLE...** Brené acknowledges that we often look for “quick and easy” fixes to difficult situations. She invites readers to believe in themselves.

**THE SHAME WE FEEL...** Shame is “*our fear of being unlovable.*” Shame says: “I am bad.” Shame lives with secrecy, silence and judgment. Brené suggests that we acknowledge and lean in to shame instead.

## GUIDEPOSTS

### #1\_Cultivating authenticity...

... to let go of what people think.

**AUTHENTICITY:** “The choice to show up and be real.” p. 49

**LESSON:** We need to have the audacity to be authentic.

### #2\_Cultivating self-compassion...

... to let go of perfectionism.

**SELF-COMPASSION:** The act of “practicing imperfection” p. 58 through self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness.

**LESSON:** We need to have the audacity to be authentic.

### #3\_Cultivating a resilient spirit...

... to let go of numbing and powerless.

**SPIRITUALITY:** A factor of resiliency that leads to hope, critical awareness and letting go of numbing of pain.

**LESSON:** To regain power to persevere is to hope.

### #4\_Cultivating gratitude and joy...

... to let go of scarcity and fear of the dark.

**JOY:** The spirit and gratitude of being.

**LESSON:** The antidote to scarcity is sufficiency.

### #5\_Cultivating intuition and trusting faith...

... to let go of the need for certainty.

**INTUITION:** “Our ability to hold space for uncertainty and our willingness to trust.” p. 89

**LESSON:** Our intuition is often silenced to feel certain.

### #6\_Cultivating creativity...

... to let go of conformity and competition.

**CREATIVITY:** “The expression of our originality.” p. 97

**LESSON:** To be creative is to let go of having to “fit in.”

### #7\_Cultivating play and rest...

... to let go of exhaustion as a status symbol and productivity as self-worth.

**PLAY:** A purposeless activity that is essential to our health.

**LESSON:** Our bodies need rest and play to renew itself.

### #8\_Cultivating calm and stillness...

... to let go of anxiety as a lifestyle.

**CALM:** “Creating perspective and mindfulness.” p. 106

**STILLNESS:** “Creating a clearing.” p. 108

**LESSON:** Whole-hearted living is about being anxiety-aware.

### #9\_Cultivating meaningful work...

... to let go of self-doubt and “supposed to.”

**MEANINGFUL WORK:** The sharing of our gifts and talents.

**LESSON:** The belief that we are not enough gets in our way.

### #10\_Cultivating laughter, song and dance...

... to let go of being cool and “always in control”.

**LAUGHTER, SONG AND DANCE:** Forms of communication that “create emotional and spiritual connection.” p. 118

**LESSON:** Laughter, song and dance exercise vulnerability.

**DIG DEEP:** Brené beautifully incorporates actionable steps to take to implement all 10 guideposts in your life. A few examples include, saying no (p. 104), meditating daily (p. 75), and taking a creative class (p. 97). Read her book for more ideas.