

AFDS 12/10/23

Vulnerability

From David Whyte's closing remarks at the first *On Being* gathering.

We tend to think of vulnerability as a kind of weakness, something to be walked around. But it's interesting to look at the origin of the word, from the Latin word 'vulneras,' meaning 'wound.'

It's really the place where you're open to the world, whether you want to be or not. You're just made that way. You were just grown that way. You feel that way. You feel the pain of others that way, and you feel your own pain that way.

And it's actually interesting to think about it not as a weakness but as a faculty for understanding what's about to happen and where you need to go — the ability to follow the path of vulnerability.

And yet, as human beings, we're constantly hoping that we can find a pathway we can follow right to the end, which will never disappear; and where we won't have our hearts broken.

And from Brene Brown:

Vulnerability is not weakness, and the uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure we face every day are not optional. Our only choice is a question of engagement. Our willingness to own and engage with our vulnerability determines the depth of our courage and the clarity of our purpose; the level to which we protect ourselves from being vulnerable is a measure of our fear and disconnection.

For discussion:

How do these pieces of thought strike you?

How do you look at your own vulnerability?

Are there different types of vulnerabilities?

Can we look at our wounds as assets?