



# Unpacking Vulnerability

This exercise is adapted from Brene Brown's "I Thought It Was Just Me (but it isn't)" Companion Worksheet.

**The element of my identity that I find the most vulnerable to be associated with is:**

**By associating with this vulnerable identifier, what perceptions do you want to have or want to avoid? To answer this question, fill out the prompts below:**

## Ideal Perceptions

I want to be perceived as:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## Unwanted Perceptions

I do NOT want to be perceived as:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Looking at your list of unwanted perceptions, answer the following questions:**

- Why are these perceptions so unwanted?
  
- Where did the messages that fuel these perceptions come from?
  
- How do these unwanted perceptions affect your behavior?

**Looking at your list of unwanted perceptions, complete the following sentence:**

If you label me and reduce me to this list of unwanted identities, you will miss the opportunity to know that I'm complex and that I have many strengths, including:

- 1.
  
- 2.
  
- 3.

According to Brené Brown, what makes us the most vulnerable to shame is often based on the unwanted perceptions that others will have of us, or the unrealistic perceptions and expectations we place upon ourselves. However, when we can accept that what makes us vulnerable is actually a strength rather than a weakness, we give ourselves the power to be authentic and empathetic individuals, as well as leaders.

From this exercise on unpacking our sources of vulnerability and shame, think about how vulnerability applies to your leadership. Craft a 1-2 minute speech answering the question: **How can vulnerability be a strength in your leadership?**