



Real Talk

on

Vulnerable Leadership

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Hi, I'm Newton



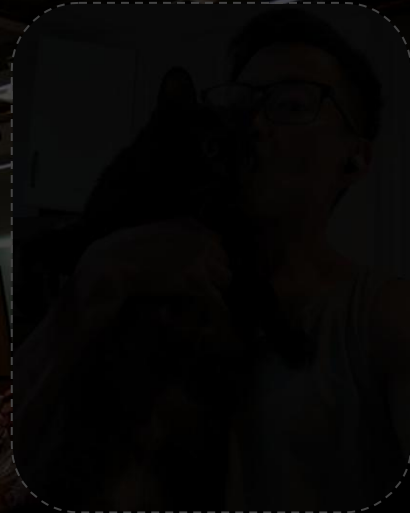
**Husband and
Father**



**World Champion
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**Leader in Health +
Performance**



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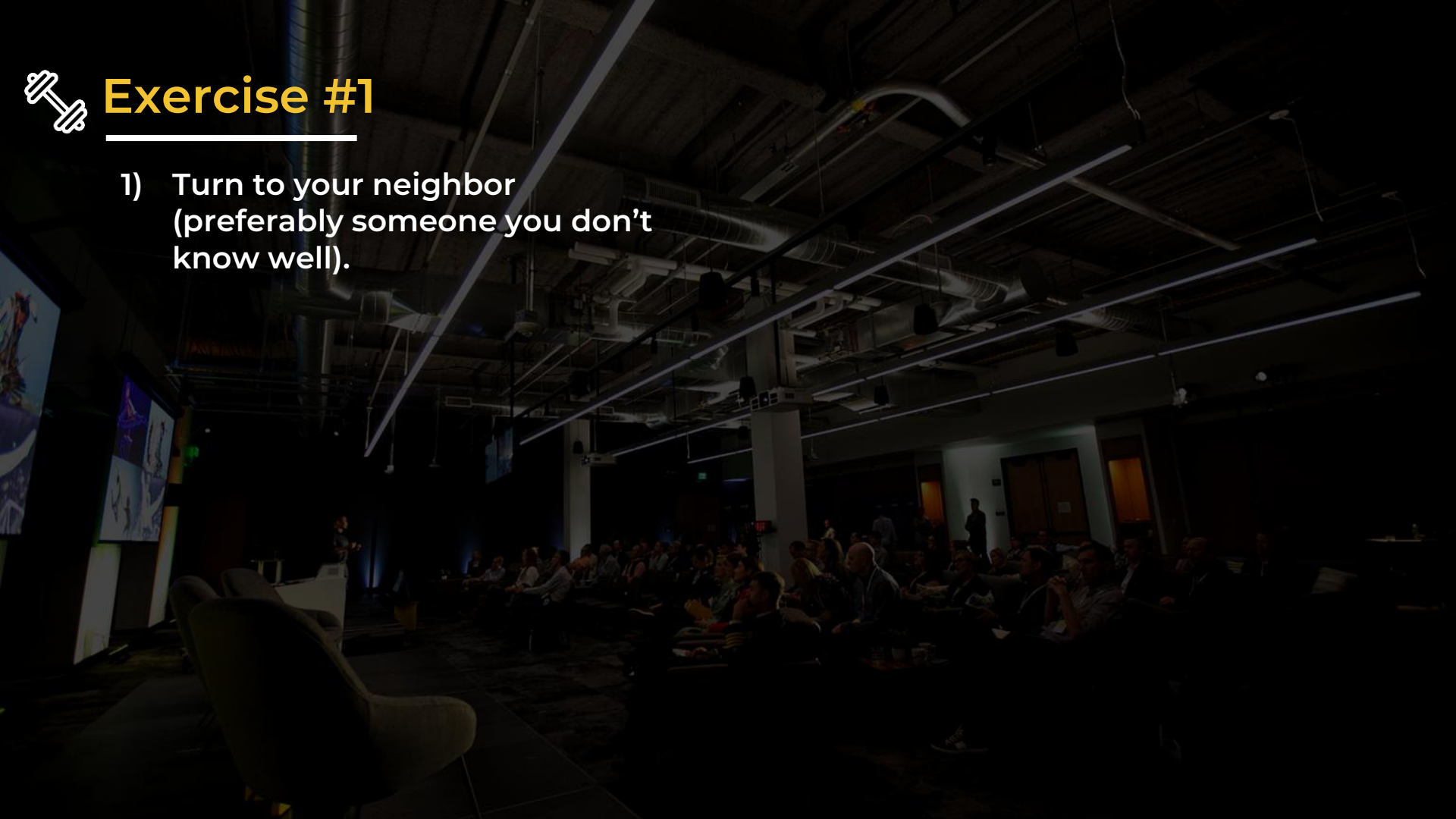


**Often Poorly Dressed
Cat Lover Who Struggles to
Share His Emotions So He
Started a Whole Public
Speaking Side Hustle Where
He Shares Them On Stage**



Exercise #1

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3) Remember what you **said** . . . and **DIDN'T say**. We'll come back to that later.



Vulnerable leadership requires **intentionality** when choosing which parts of yourself you choose to emphasize, especially during the **moments that matter**.



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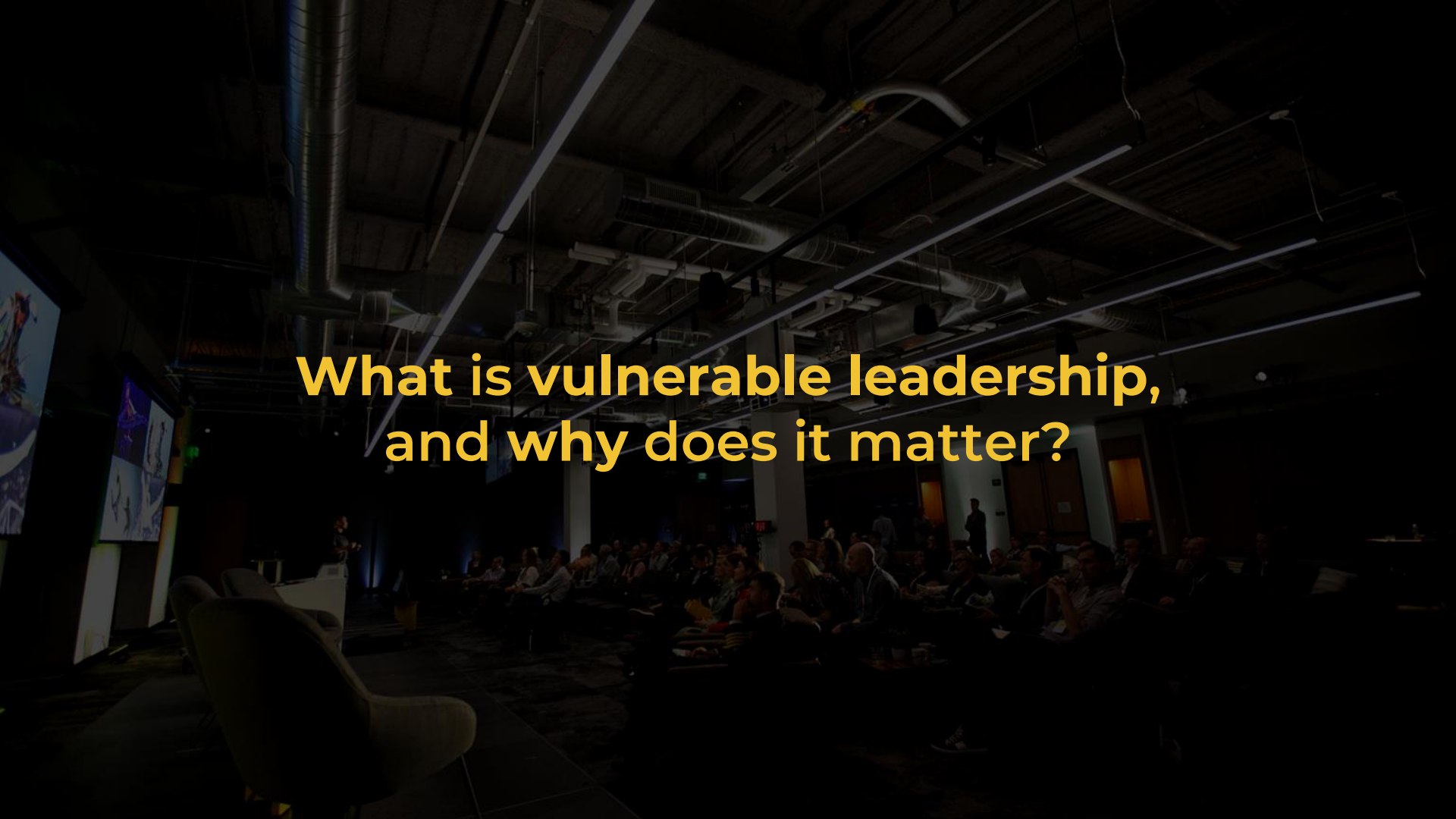
Often Poorly Dressed Cat Lover Who Struggles to Share His Emotions So He Started a Whole Public Speaking Side Hustle Where He Shares Them On Stage



**What is vulnerable leadership,
and why does it matter?**

**What does vulnerable
leadership look like in
practice?**

**How do we effectively lead
with vulnerability?**



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and why does it matter?**



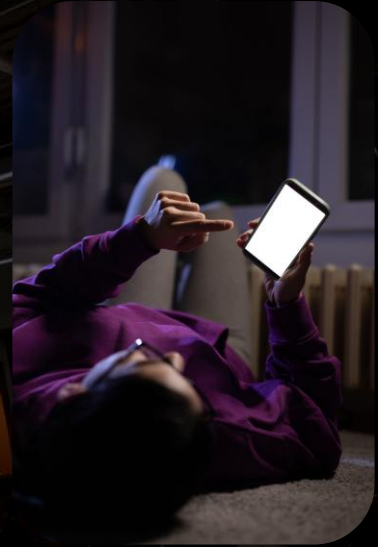
Geo/Socio
Political **Tensions**



The **Rise**
(and/or **Bubble**)
of AI



Financial and
Labor Market
Uncertainty



Loneliness and
Mental Health
Epidemics



‘Quiet cracking’ at work is less visible than ‘quiet quitting,’ but it’s ‘just as dangerous,’ report finds

PUBLISHED MON, AUG 25 2025-8:00 AM EDT | UPDATED MON, AUG 25 2025-8:09 AM EDT



Ana Teresa Solá

WATCH LIVE

KEY POINTS

- “Quiet cracking” refers to the idea of persistent unhappiness in the workplace, leading to disengagement, poor performance and a desire to quit, according to a new report.
- However, workers feel less encouraged to switch jobs as companies slow down hiring.
- Here’s what frustrated employees should consider, according to experts.

“Quiet Quitting” has been replaced with “**Quiet Cracking**”

Problem

When **fear** takes root in your organization, more people stop prioritizing helping **each other**, and instead prioritize helping **themselves**.



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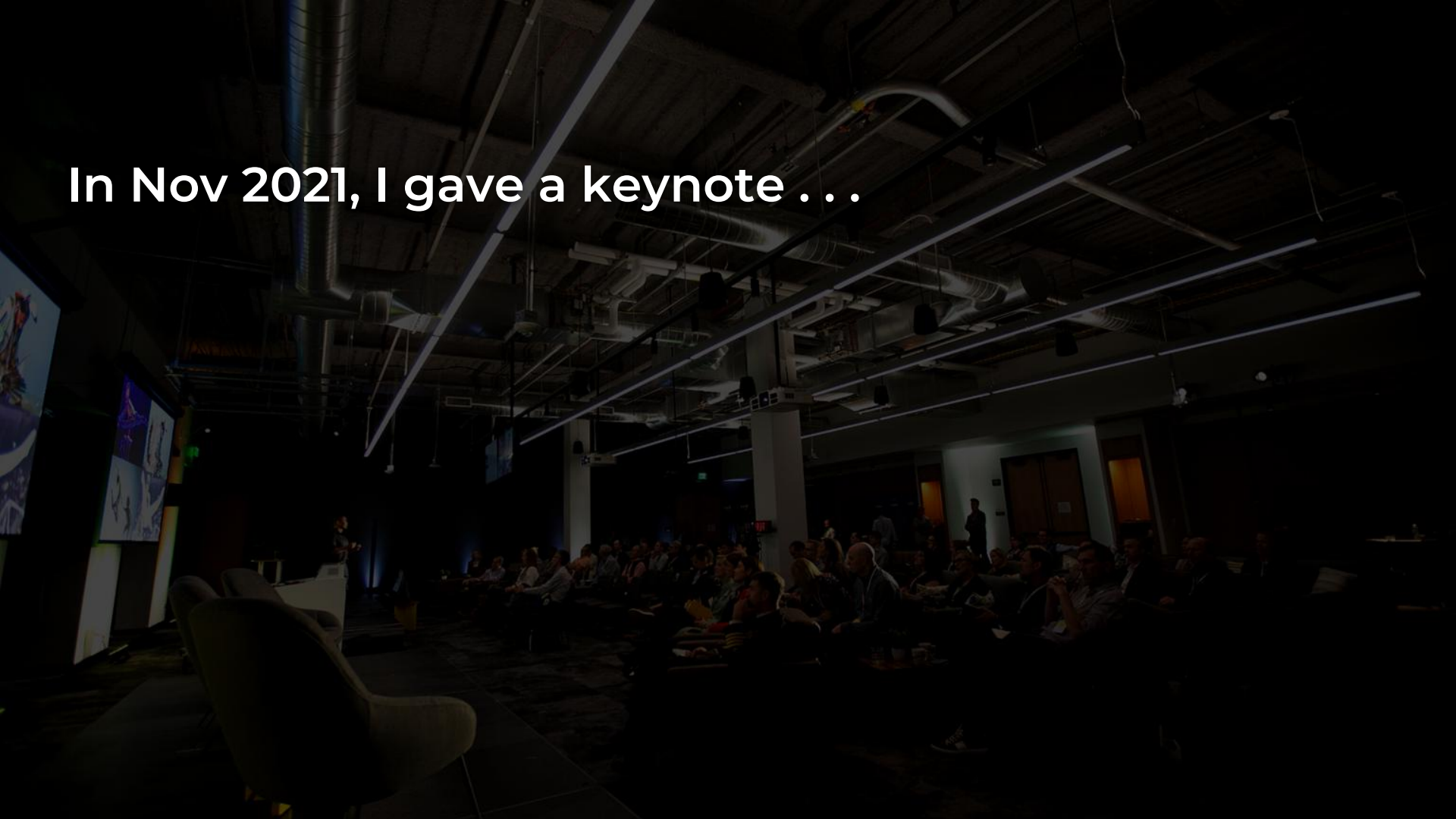
Solution

Vulnerable leadership is the **antidote** to the problems that can arise from fear throughout your organization by nurturing **trust** and **connection**.



Why is vulnerable leadership effective?

In Nov 2021, I gave a keynote ...





In Nov 2021, I gave a keynote . . .

**. . . about how I was struggling with
depression, anxiety, and burnout
and I knew I wasn't alone.**



It started with a
single interview ...



which turned into more interviews..



which turned into
keynotes,
workshops, . . .





and **hundreds**
of very **honest**
conversations
over the last
four years.



Why did people want to
hear **me** speak?

“ ”

We really wanted

to hear from a leader

that would actually

say something

REAL.



What does vulnerable leadership look like in practice?



“Conventional” Leaders

Keep their message as **palatable** as possible in order to minimize risk

Keep it high level, speak in terms of general trends

Only talk about struggles that they'd already overcome



Vulnerable Leaders

Choose a message that deeply resonates with those that most need to feel seen even if it requires a courageous risk

Zoom in all the way to a specific human story (ideally their own)

Openly share about their current struggles that they have yet to overcome demonstrating that “we all struggle.”



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*“The **wound** is the place
the light enters you.”*

- Rumi, 13th century poet



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Exercise #2 (do this as homework)

- 1) Take a picture of this slide.
- 2) Later today, reflect to yourself: “In terms of **vulnerable leadership**, where do you feel **YOU** (not WE) **could improve?**”
- 3) Pick one person you will **share** your insights with after this talk.



In the **moments that matter**,
how do leaders actually apply
these insights?

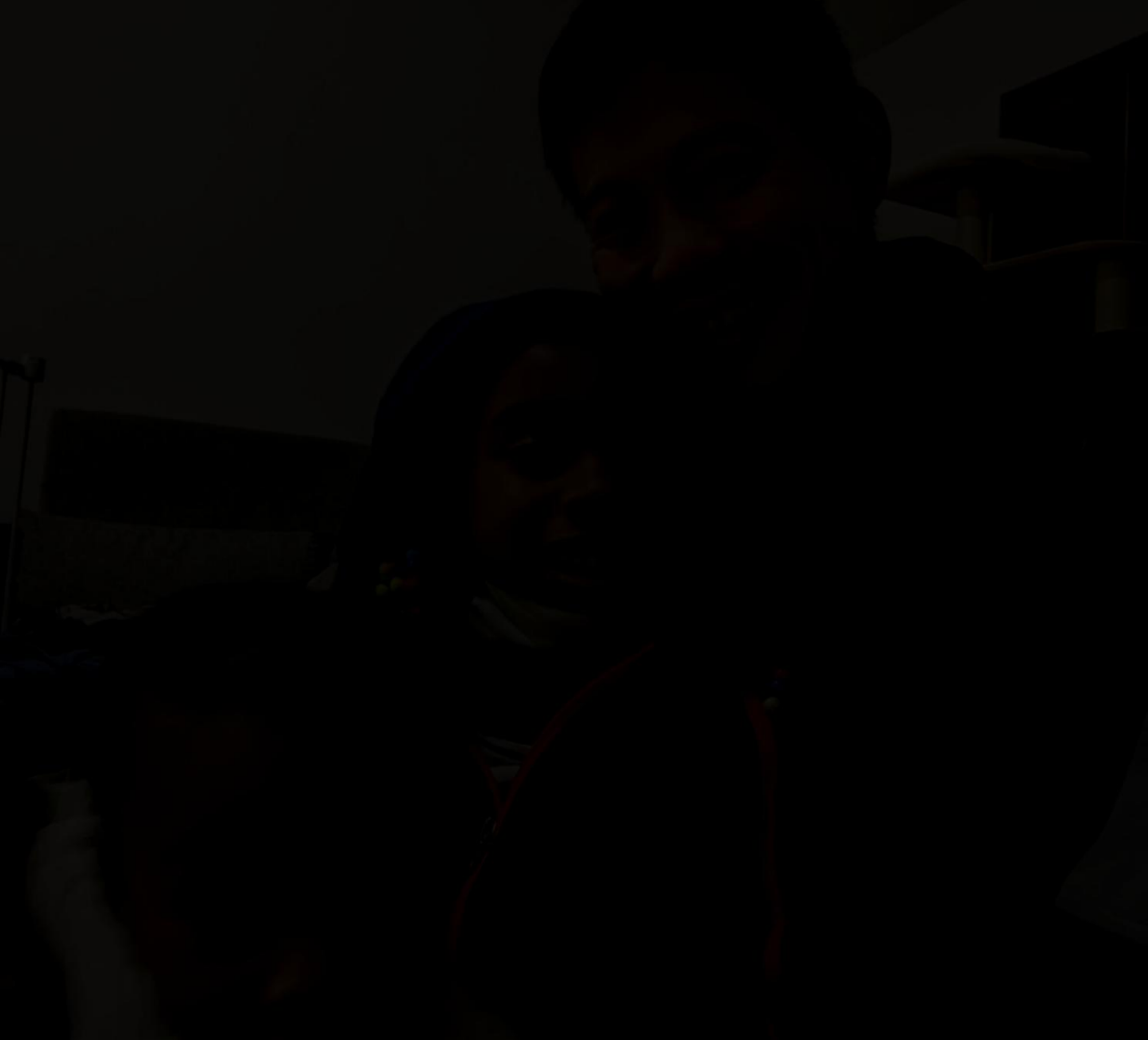


Case Study: Google's layoff on Jan 20, 2023

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The following two photos were taken on the the same day







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Not only were many of us never trained to be vulnerable in the workplace, we were explicitly **trained** to **NEVER be vulnerable** in the workplace.

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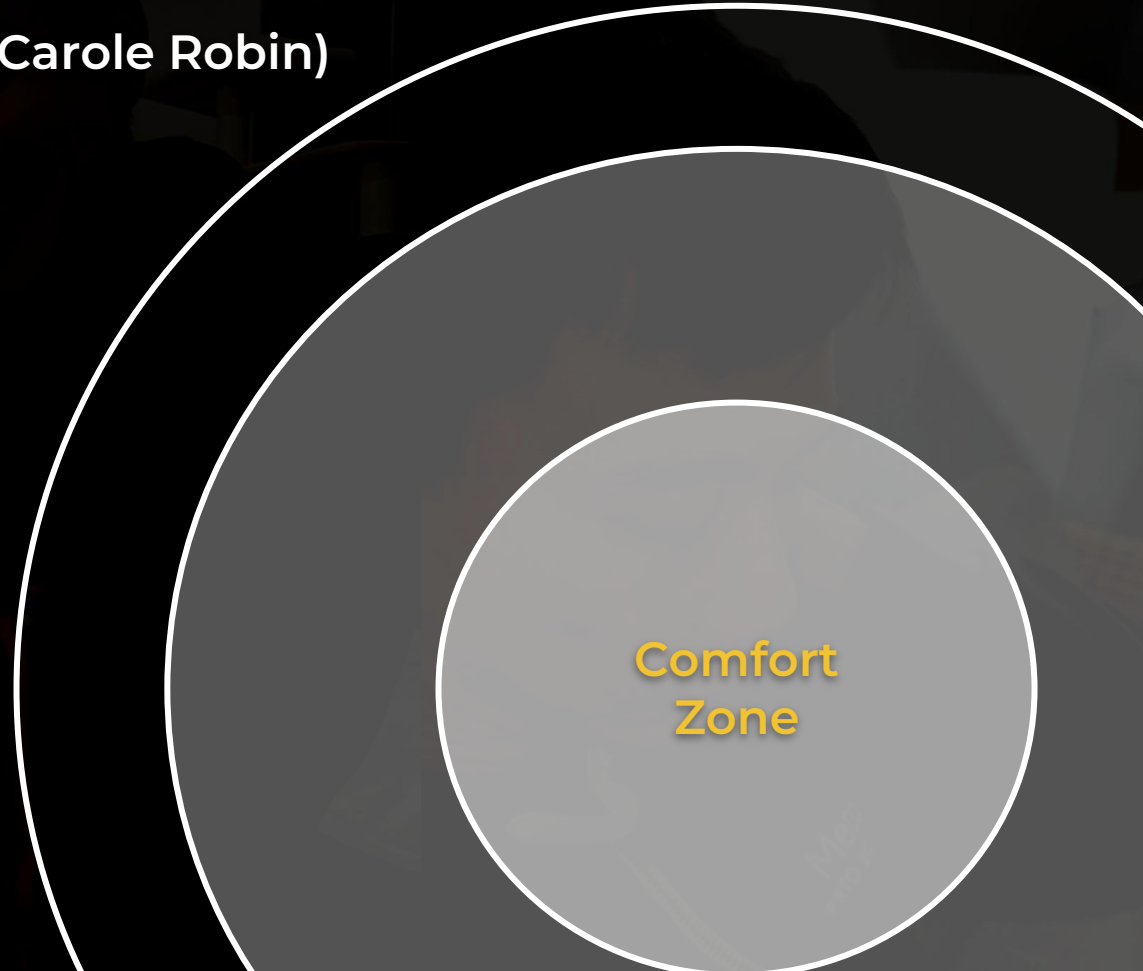
Solution



Your capacity for **vulnerability** can be **systematically built** and increased over time like the strength of a muscle.

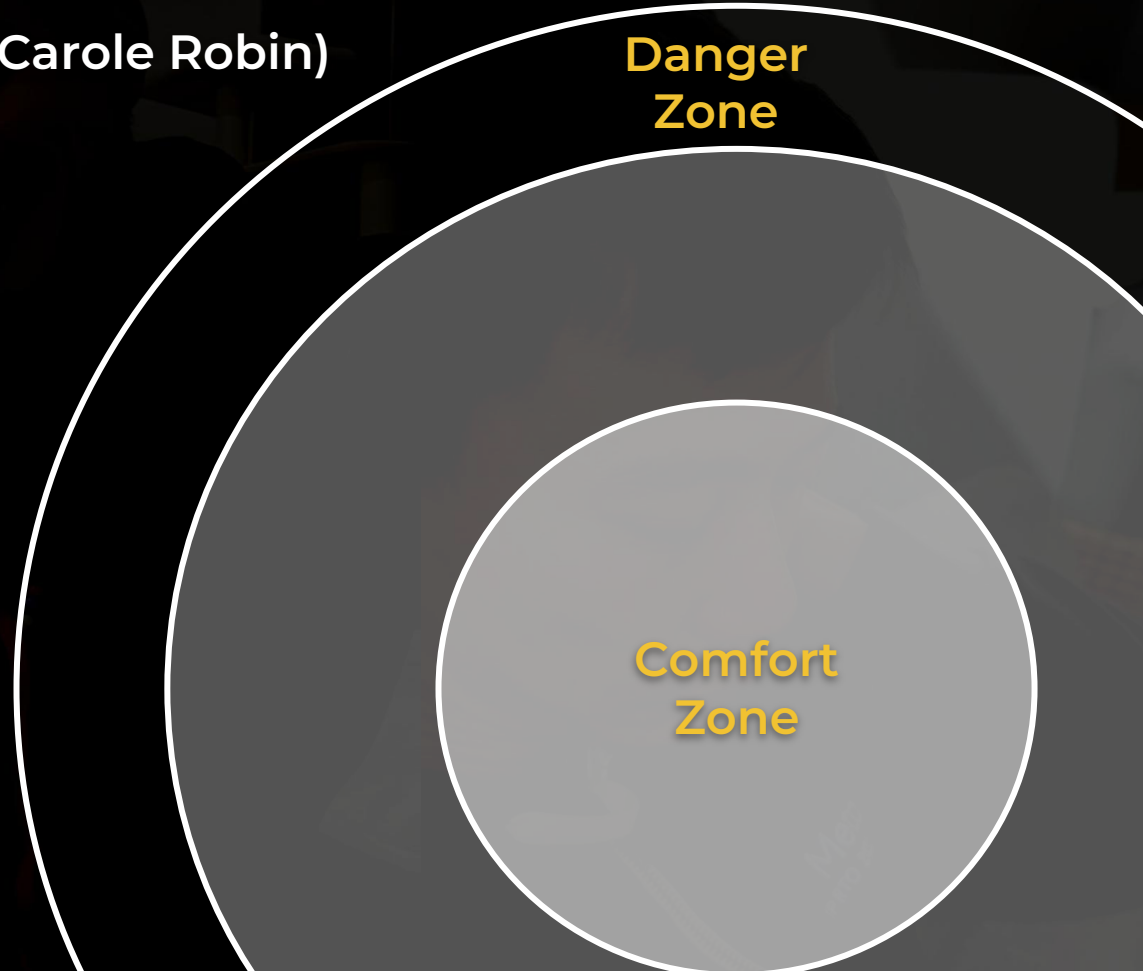


“The 15% Rule” (Carole Robin)



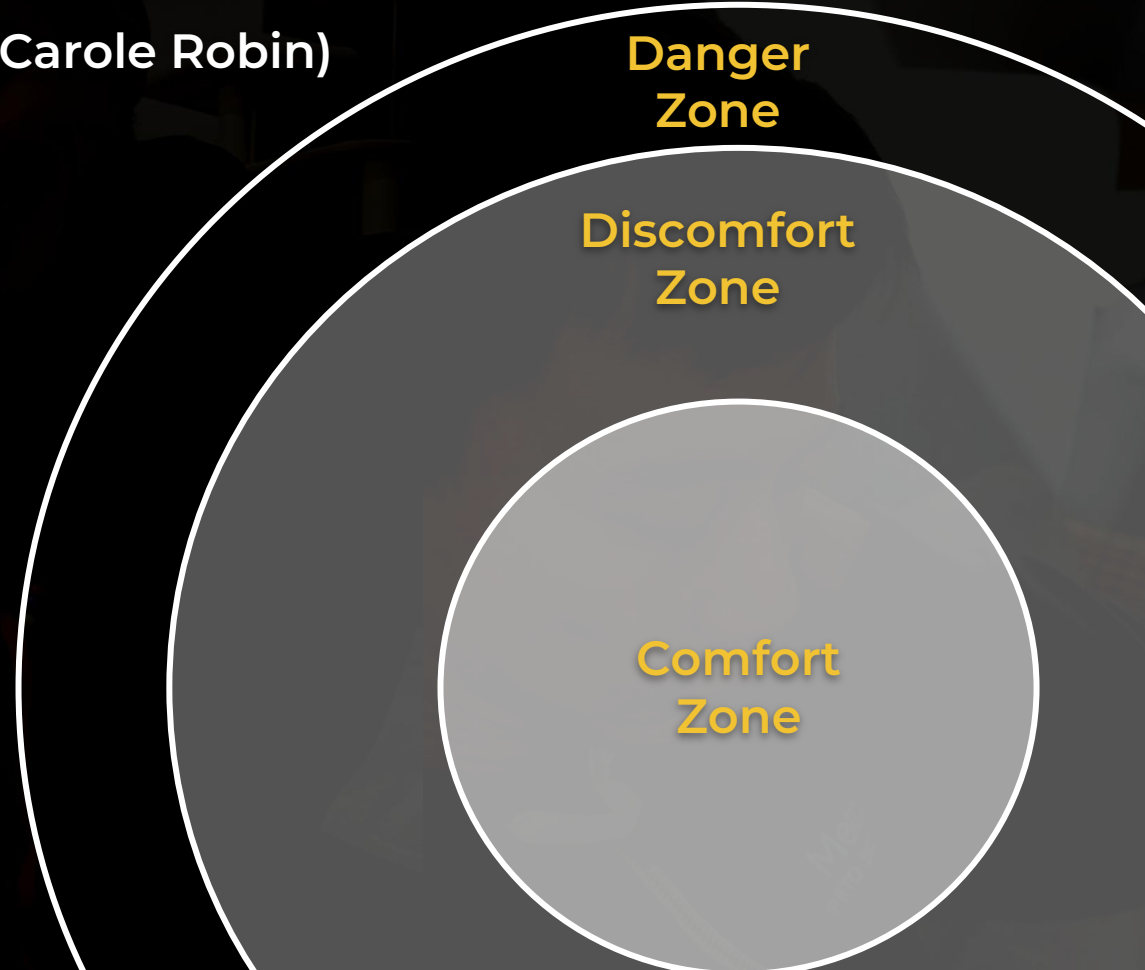


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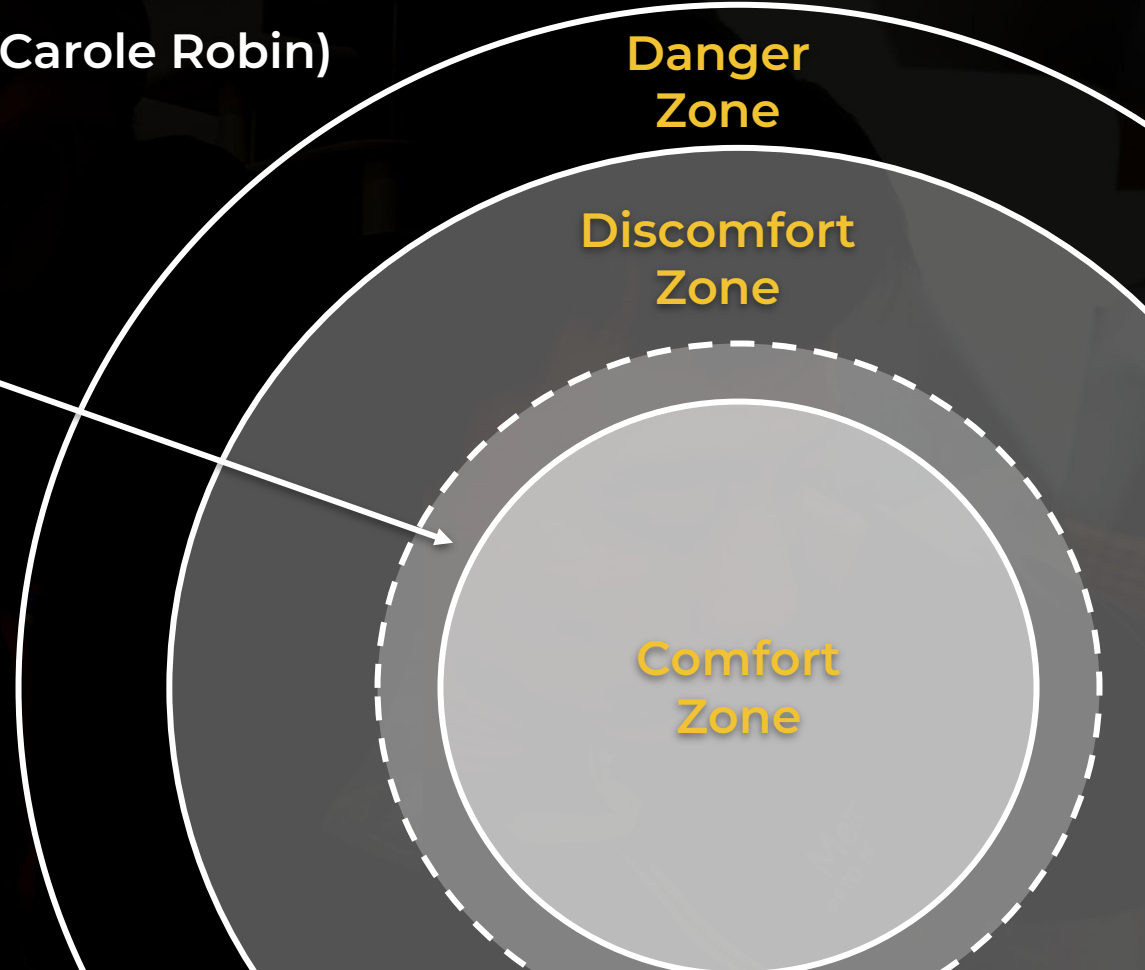
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15%



Danger
Zone

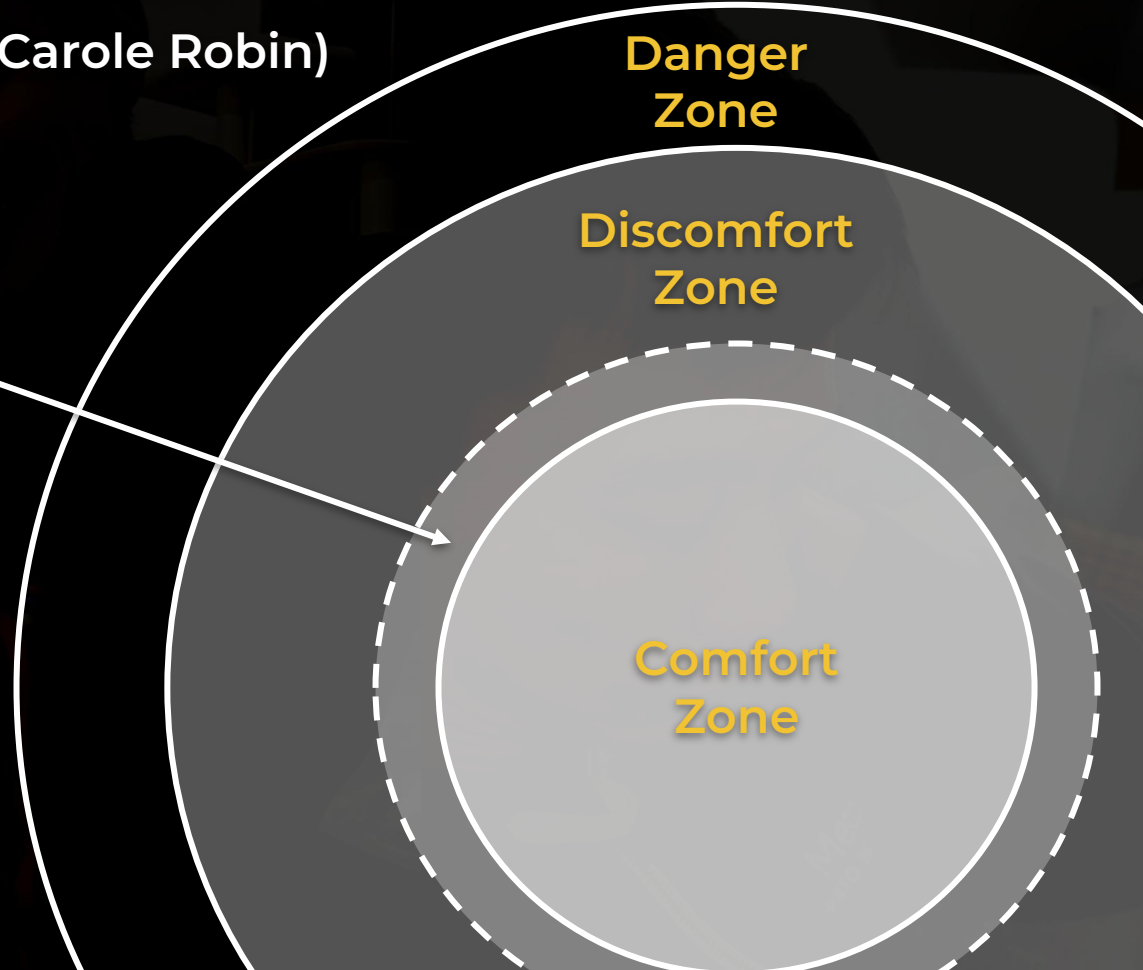
Discomfort
Zone

Comfort
Zone



“The 15% Rule” (Carole Robin)

15% If you feel your throat or chest tighten just a bit, your body temperature rise, etc., you're doing it right 👍





Exercise #1 Revisited

- 1) Turn to your neighbor
- 2) Take up to ~1m per person and respond to this prompt:

“Tell me about yourself.”

- 3) Push AT LEAST 15% into the **discomfort zone**



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Some “less comfortable” questions

- “Who do you miss the most right now? Why?”
- “What worries you the most right now?”
- “What did you sacrifice to make it this far in your career? Would you do it over again?”

- 3) Push AT LEAST 15% into the **discomfort zone**



One last lesson on **real
talk on vulnerable
leadership**



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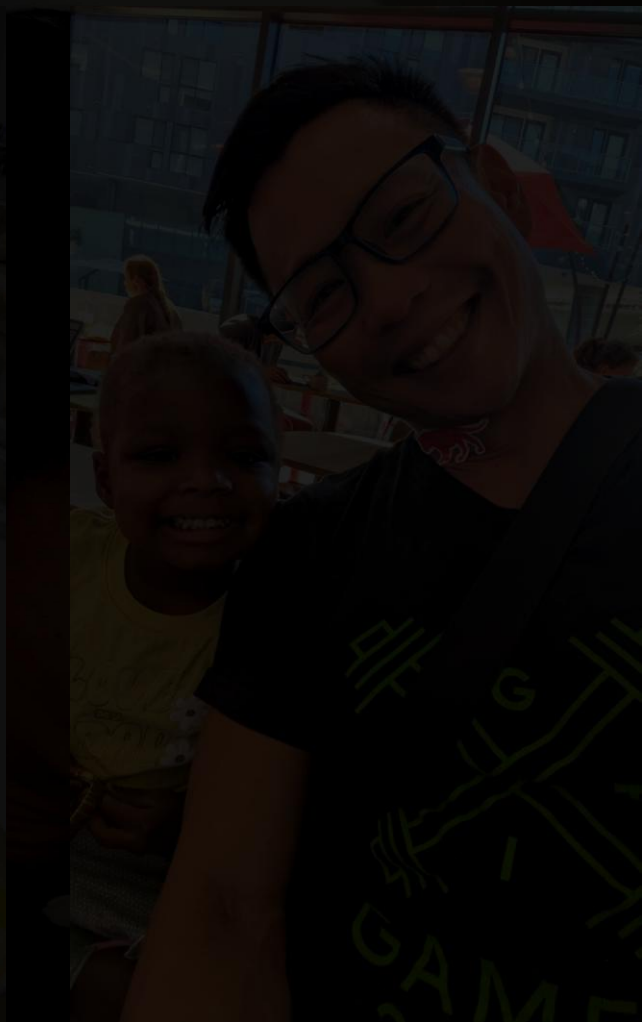
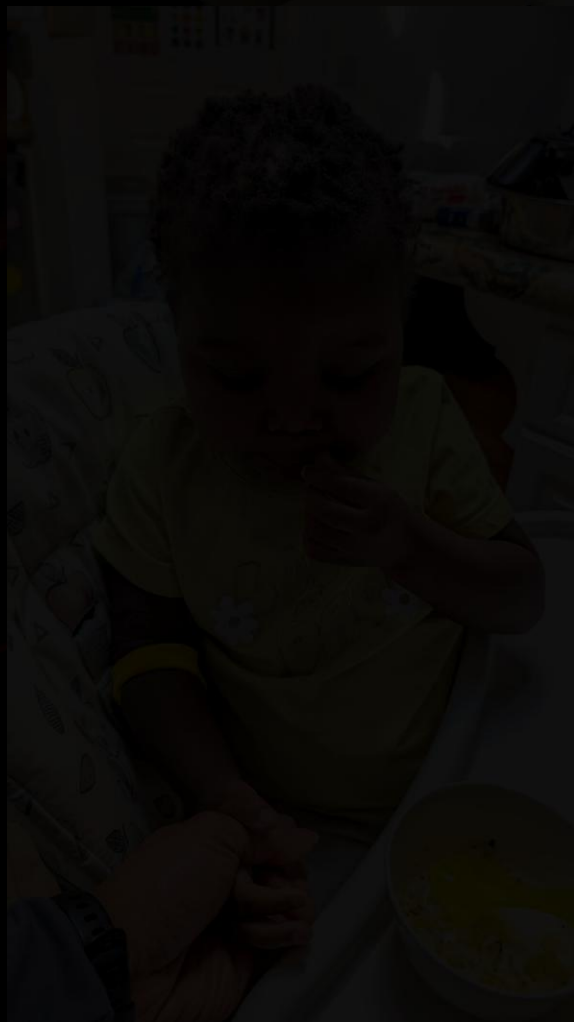
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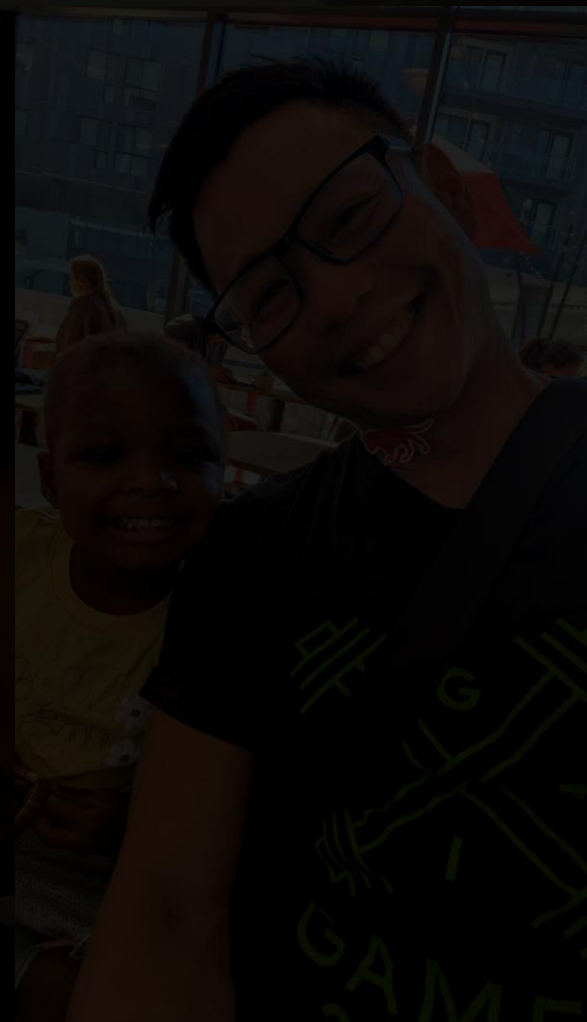
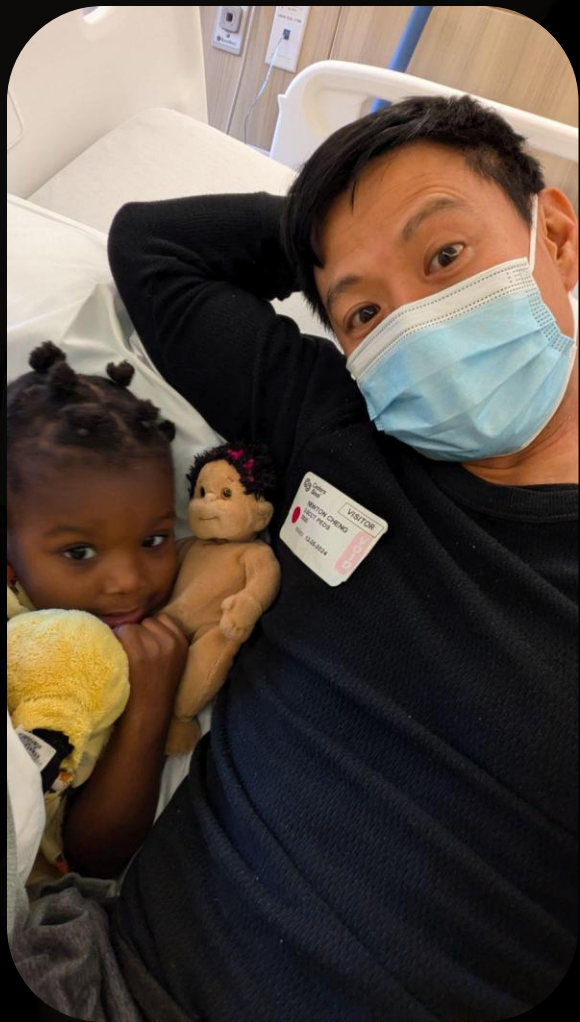


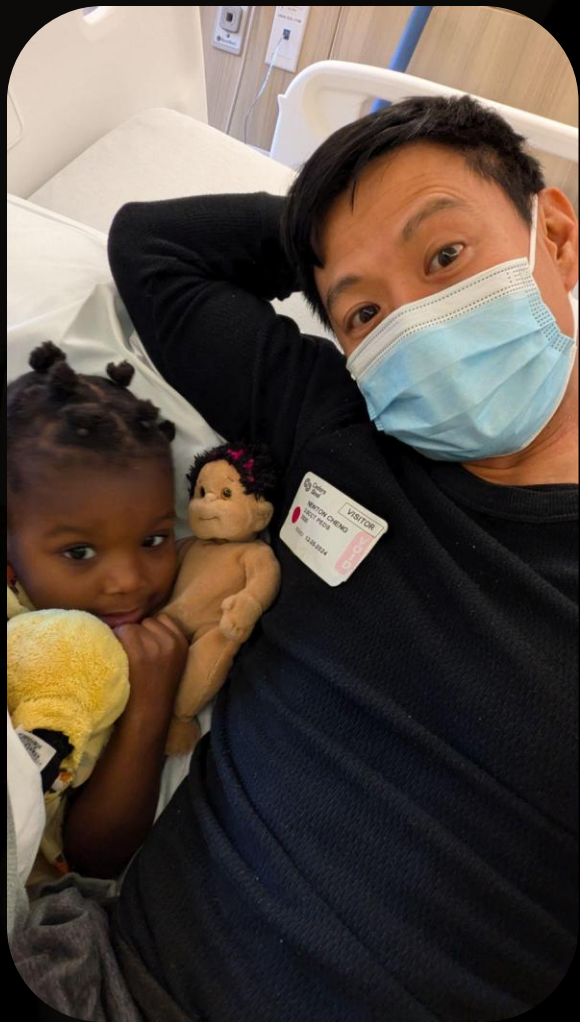
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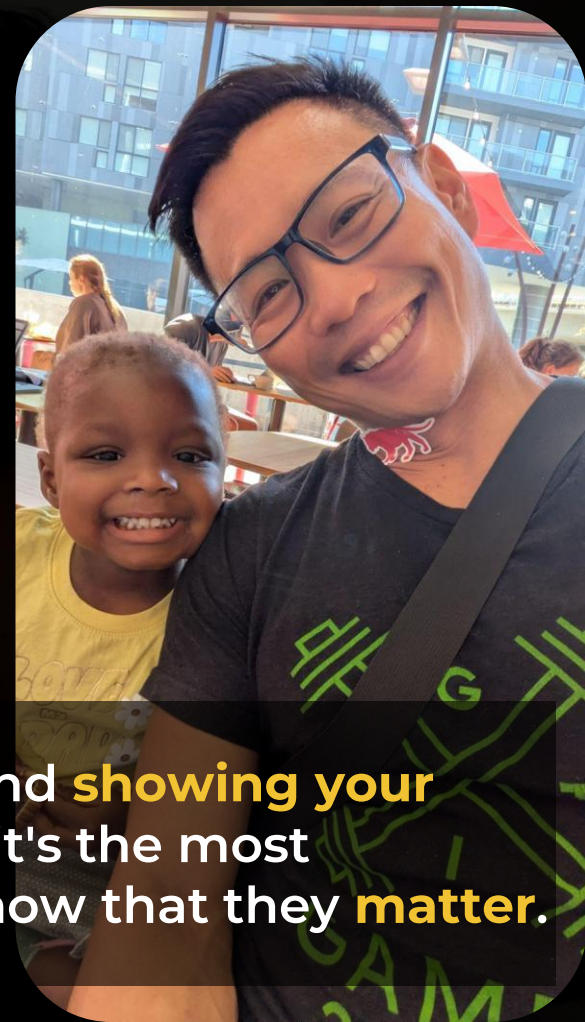
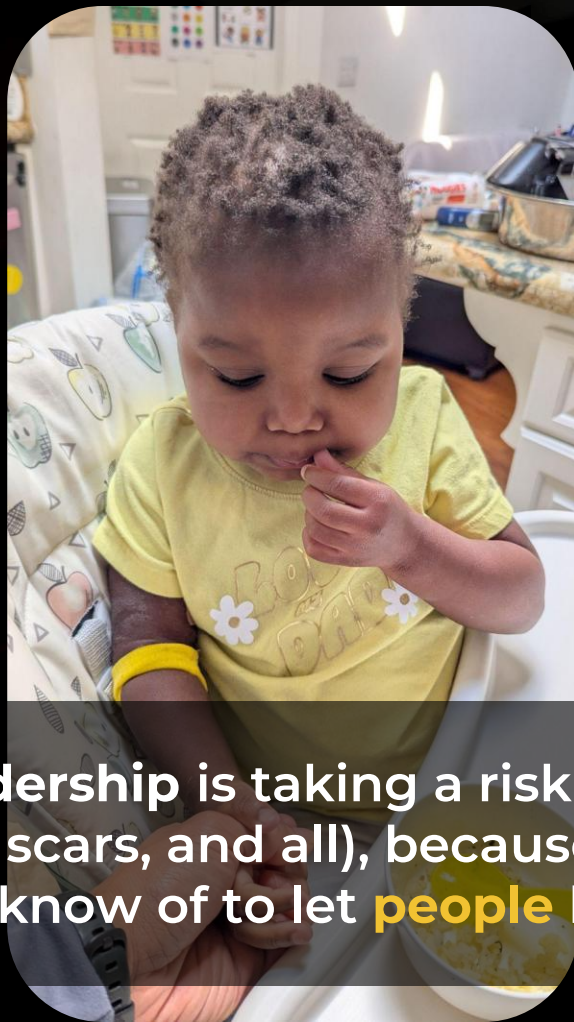


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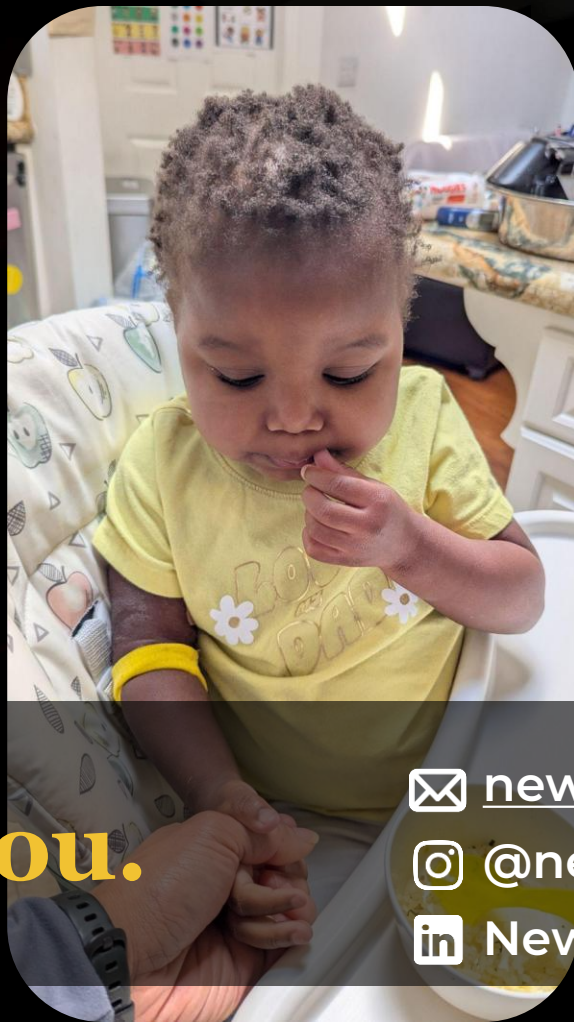








Vulnerable leadership is taking a risk and **showing your heart** (wounds, scars, and all), because it's the most powerful way I know of to let **people** know that they **matter**.



Thank you.

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Extra Slides

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Nurturing a Culture of Vulnerable Leadership



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