

Recommended by Maj Lindsey Slyman
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LOVE WARRIOR, Glennon Doyle (Flatiron Books, 2016)

What's it about: Doyle speaks from her heart and experience having gone through many of life's challenges - from addiction (drugs, alcohol, an eating disorder) to relationship challenges (abortion, keeping a child before marriage, marriage, infidelity) to parenting - making choices along the way to build a life that feels authentic to her. This is a memoir documenting the challenges she faced in her life and how she handled (or mishandled) them. She seeks to give everyone permission to FEEL one's emotions and never judge yourself for doing so, because feelings are what make us human and connect with each other. Connecting with our feelings can teach us valuable things about ourselves. Life is hard, let go of the idea it was ever supposed to be easy. We can do hard things.

What I found interesting: This book put into words many of the feelings, thoughts, and struggles I have had going through grief and uncertainty. She is a writer that has the ability to beautifully put into words exactly where I have been at certain points in life. She can make anyone feel that they are not alone in what they have felt, experienced, thought, and/or been through in life.

Who's it for? (best audience): Specifically women who have experienced body image issues or relationship challenges. Although this book can very easily translate to mothers, fathers, sisters, or brothers or those who know any of the aforementioned. It gives context to life's challenges and you never know what someone is dealing (or not dealing) with behind the scenes.

Questions for reflection:

1. Life can be hard. Am I in touch with how this person/this experience/this food/this relationships make me feel?
2. Have you ever wanted to tuck your old self away? Is it possible to re-emerge as a new person following an moving experience or in a relationship after betrayal?
3. Think of a time you or someone else experienced grief; how did you show up for them or would you have liked someone to show up for you?
4. What does being a "love warrior" mean to you? How has Glennon's story contributed to your connection to yourself and others going forward?

Untamed, Glennon Doyle (Dial Press, 2020)

What's it about: This book is about releasing ourselves from the society's idea of "being good" unrealistic standards of how we "ought" to be and do. We need to free ourselves from internal pressures we put on ourselves to please unhealthy external audiences, and more fully trust our inner voice. This book talks about examining self and making decisions along with building a life based on our inner "knowing" vice any external pressures that misguide us. We can be empowered to cultivate our own joy and happiness.

What I found interesting: I found the idea that our identity is unconsciously being shaped by what society, our parents, and other people tell us we "should" and are "supposed to" do and be true. This book provides a journey through Glennon's "untaming" herself and ways that she got in touch with her inner "knowing" which broke many of her own deeply seeded beliefs while growing up. Specifically, that she was "too much" and now her own ability to live a life freely her own, and desire to raise her children to be fully and freely who they are.

Who's it for? (best audience): This is a mostly female focused/female perspective book, but the message can and should be one that anyone can apply to their own personal and professional lives as individuals/parents/leaders.

Questions for reflection:

1. In what areas of your life do you continually seek approval from others, or desire to meet others expectations vice living according to your own inner "knowing"?
2. Do you have deep seeded beliefs about yourself that you have been trained to believe? How can you dig up the roots of those beliefs to plant the seeds of growth for you to become more yourself every day?
3. Do you provide those in your life (children, friends, co-workers, and subordinates, parents) the freedom to show up fully themselves without seeking to change or tame them? How can you better allow those around you to own their inner "knowing" and fully express themselves in all areas of their life? Are you setting the example?

Podcasts:

Tara Brach

What's it about: Tara Brach is a PhD psychologist, author, and proponent of Buddhist meditation. Her podcast has weekly mindfulness talks and guided meditations. Some of her talks are longer with more discussion and storytelling on things such as acceptance and healing. While others are shorter with more focus on guided meditation.

What I found interesting: This podcast has given me a lot to think about in my own life from listening to others to finding peace during grief to interconnectedness. She provides great perspective and a mindful approach to many areas in life. What I like most is that during each podcast she generally talks about a subject for a short bit then gives time and guides a self-reflection on the topic.

Who's it for? (best audience): Anyone seeking to start or further their own mindfulness or self-reflection.

Unlocking Us, Brene Brown

What's it about: Brene Brown is most known for her research and work around courage, vulnerability, shame, and empathy. This podcast is one where Brene discusses with guests and shares her own research on subjects of emotions and being deeply human.

What I found interesting: This podcast is one where Brene expertly facilitates conversations with other thinkers who have done their own research or charted their own paths on vulnerability and courage. She shares some of her own insights and framework around being human and connecting with one another. This podcast encourages individuals to challenge themselves to show up authentically and feel; feeling is a real sign of life.

Who's it for? (best audience): Any Marine interested in developing more fully as a human being.

Major Lindsey Slyman is an Air Command and Control Officer; she has served aboard ship on the 22nd MEU and deployed to Iraq twice. She is an avid runner and competes recreationally in road races and triathlons.