



Known & Loved: Vulnerability and Discipleship

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Known & Loved

A few perspectives on visualizing vulnerability

"To be loved but not known is comforting but *superficial*. To be known AND not loved is our *greatest fear*. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot *like being loved by God*. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us." - Timothy Keller

"We are in a world looking for someone, looking for us." Curt Thompson

"Who told you that you were naked?" God to Eve

"...because I have you in my heart..." Paul to Philippians

What does it mean to be known?

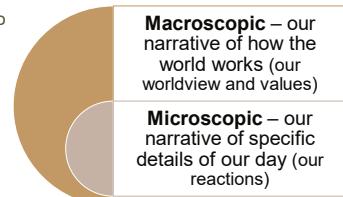
"O LORD, YOU HAVE SEARCHED ME, AND KNOWN ME." DAVID (PS. 139)

Our Stories Reveal Who We Are

To be vulnerable is to be in a place where we can share and interpret our stories with each other in a spirit of openness, transparency, and safety.

The Soul of Shame, Curt Thompson

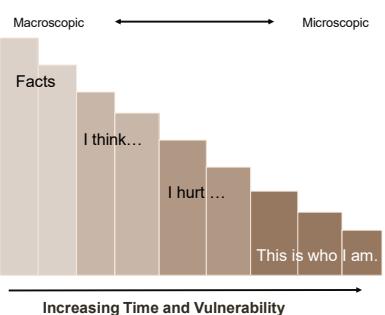
Types of Stories in our Lives



Macroscopic – our narrative of how the world works (our worldview and values)

Microscopic – our narrative of specific details of our day (our reactions)

Understanding Levels of Sharing



Macroscopic ← → Microscopic

Facts

I think...

I hurt...

This is who I am.

Increasing Time and Vulnerability

Reflection

- Consider some of your most vulnerable stories.
- Do you feel comfortable sharing these stories with others? If so, who helps you interpret your stories?
- On a scale of 1 – 10, how well do you feel known by others?

What does it mean to be loved?

"SO WE, BEING MANY, ARE ONE BODY IN CHRIST, AND EVERY ONE MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER." (ROMANS 12:5)

Embrace Vulnerability



Vulnerability – to show emotion or allow one's weaknesses to be seen or known.



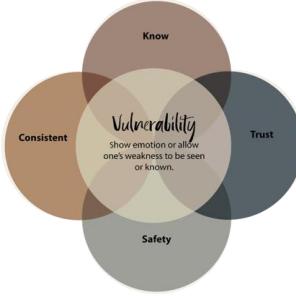
Vulnerable Community – a community that provides safety for its members as we are known more deeply and still loved.



"The work required to overcome the inertia of shame and turn in a posture of vulnerability toward someone else can initially feel overwhelming."
– Curt Thompson

The Soul of Shame, Curt Thompson

Aspects of Vulnerability



Growing in Vulnerability

Limiting Illusions

- Vulnerability should be easy.
- Some people have the knack for vulnerability, others do not.
- Shame limits.
- We understand others and know why they do what they do.
- Only adults are able to achieve vulnerability.
- Others need me. I need to help them.

Enabling Visions

- Vulnerability requires bravery.
- Vulnerability is built an interaction or conversation at a time.
- Reception enables.
- We do not know (and need a curiosity mindset).
- Start young and model it for the next generation.
- I need others as much as I think they need me.

A Simple Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen

Francis of Assisi

Reflection & Discussion

- At a high level, think about a vulnerable relationship you have. What does it feel like to feel "known and loved"?
- What makes it difficult for you to be known & loved by others?
- What makes it "okay" to be known & loved by others?
- What would it take for me to grow in my vulnerability with others?