



Weekly Resources for Collective Worship, Spiritual
Development and Pastoral Care

PHASE: SECONDARY

**WEEK 9 THEME:
VULNERABILITY**





KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

Vulnerability is not weakness! It is not winning or losing, it is having the courage to show up, be seen when you have no control over the outcome. It is about asking for what you need, having hard conversations and talk about how you are feeling. *Brené Brown*

Christians believe, that being vulnerable means you are honest with who you are, how you feel and acknowledging the parts of yourself that you would rather keep hidden. It's not hiding behind an 'Instagram life', its about being real with God and people you meet. It is hard to be vulnerable, to feel out of control or anxious about situations. Christians are reminded throughout the Bible that God's power and grace is enough, that even in times of vulnerability, He is in control and we will not be left abandoned or alone.

BIBLE STORY OF THE WEEK:

**"Learn to do right; seek justice.
Defend the oppressed.
Take up the cause of the fatherless;
plead the case of the widow."
Isaiah 1.17**

TO CONSIDER AS YOU PREPARE

KEY QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"I will never leave you, I will never abandon you". Let us be bold, then and say, "The LORD is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?" (Hebrews 13:5-6)

'What makes you vulnerable makes you beautiful!' **Brené Brown**

“It is in brokenness
sometimes that we
understand what it
truly means to lead.”

**BRYAN
STEVENSON**



LISTEN & WATCH: Footprints in the Sand by Leona Lewis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCsZNalcaXM>



PRAY:

Dear Lord,

Thank you that you love us all. Thank you that you are justice.

Thank you that you say you will heal the broken hearted. Thank you that you instruct us to love and care for each other in our vulnerabilities.

Help me in my brokenness. May I help others too.

In Jesus' name

Amen

I. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP - *Invitational, Inclusive, Inspiring.*

GATHER:

Find a place where you can be still, without interruptions. You might like to light a candle as you begin.

As you sit quietly, look at this image and reflect on what it makes you think of.



⇒ A spider's web is incredibly vulnerable, but there is beauty in the strength of its design. What if a spider never created its web out of fear of it breaking or being destroyed?

This act of worship is going to explore what vulnerable might mean. It can be difficult to understand, as people use the word vulnerable in different ways. You might have heard the term 'vulnerable people' lots in the news recently as these groups of people have had to take more care and stay in their homes for longer than others due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

ENGAGE:

The dictionary describes vulnerability as *'The emotion we experience during times of uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure.'* (– be aware that most definitions use the word weak in the definition, we are trying to break away from this stereotypes, so avoid these if you can.)

I wonder if you thought of anything else? What about a time when you had the courage to be honest with someone? Or a time when you asked a group of children if you could play with them?

Some people think you mustn't be vulnerable, as it makes you weak. But being vulnerable is actually ok, it isn't something you need to hide.

Genuine vulnerability enables you to share your emotions, be honest or say sorry when needed. It allows you to ask for help when you are struggling. This takes courage, as you will have to put yourself in a place where you might get hurt or rejected, but what would you miss out on if you didn't ever take a risk?

READ THIS FAMOUS STORY – FOOTPRINTS

"One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,

One belonging to me and one to my Lord.
After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.
This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."
He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.
When you saw only one set of footprints,
It was then that I carried you."

REFLECT:

Listen to this song called 'I am Amazing by Philippa Hanna

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVNKj0fbMiU>

Listen carefully to the lyrics.

*That I am amazing, in spite of what I can see,
When I look at myself wishing I could be anyone other than me
Cos I was created
With everything I could ever need
So I'm not gonna change
I'm gonna stay just the way God made me*

Christians believe that God created each person perfectly unique. The Bible tells Christians that God knew each person before they were born, watched as they grew and even knows how many hairs there are on each person's head! (Taken from Psalm 139) This reminds Christians that God knows everything about each person, mistakes, faults, cracks, good deeds, kind thoughts etc. So, it is ok to be vulnerable before God, because he knows and loves each person just the way they are.

SEND OUT:

You are enough! You are amazing!

You don't need to try and be someone you are not. Be who you are.

Remember, what makes you vulnerable makes you beautiful!

PRAY

Dear Lord,
Where there is hurt and pain, thank you that you do not shy away.
Thank you that you came to bring reconciliation to brokenness.
Be with those who need your comfort, healing, justice, peace and love.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

2. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)

EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

Watch this video about being truly human; joy from vulnerability (and help on social media):

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=PEcvRKsmeoE>

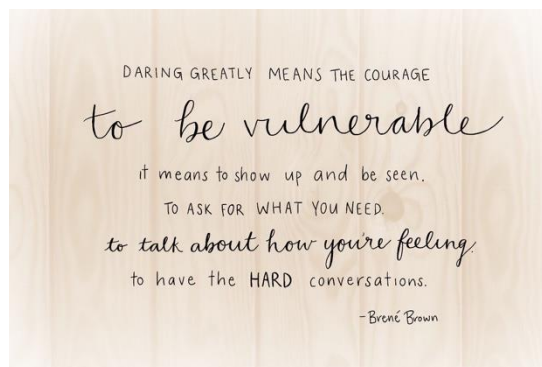
Consider the alternative to being vulnerable:

C S Lewis, from 'The Four Loves':

"There is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable."

Add your thoughts and reflections from this week to your journal. Below are some suggestions for you to experience and reflect on moments of vulnerability in your life.

Reflect on this statement from Brené Brown and add your thoughts to your journal.



- When have I had the courage to be vulnerable?
- When could I have been more vulnerable and honest about my feelings?
- When have I ignored difficult situations or avoided challenging conversations this week? What could I have done differently?
- What hard conversations have I had this weekend, how did they go? Did I have the courage to be vulnerable and lean into these difficult conversations?

ACTIVITIES that can help develop PRACTICES-HABITS:

Sit around the table for a meal at the end of the day. Ask the question – how are you? What has been the best part of the day and why? What has been the most difficult part of the day and why? Encourage further conversation of why something may have upset you. What was the trigger? How did you feel? What can we do as a family to support you when this happens again? You might like to bring your thoughts to God and pray together as a family. Add these prayers to your journal where each family member makes a contribution and then pray through each situation as it arises. Remember to record those answers to prayers

Reflect on the vulnerability of nature. It is often being out in the countryside, that some Christians encounter God and feel God very near to them. As a family, go out for a walk, take the camera and spend time taking photographs with a zoom lens. Take photos of the flower petals, birds and the tiny insects. For Christians, it is a reminder that God is interested in the very infinite details of their lives and he cares for every part of it.



CONVERSATIONS STARTERS that can help develop RELATIONSHIPS-COMMUNITY:

- Who do you talk to about your feelings?
- Does that feel hard or easy?
- How could I help you?
- Will you help me?
- What do you love about home?
- What makes home life tough sometimes?
- Why do you think so many people feel lonely today?
- I wonder what we could do about this?

These questions are ideal if you are doing a meal or just sitting around in groups with a drink to encourage positive conversations depending, of course, on how well people know each other.

Questions taken from a resource called 'Table Talk' www.table-talk.org

3. PASTORAL CARE - ideas for looking after...

Ourselves & Our staff

A reflection:

Treasure in Clay Jars 2 Corinthians 4: 7-9 (TPT)

⁷We are like common clay jars that carry this glorious treasure within, so that the extraordinary overflow of power will be seen as God's, not ours. ⁸Though we experience every kind of pressure, we're not crushed. At times we don't know what to do, but quitting is not an option. ⁹We are persecuted by others, but God has not forsaken us. We may be knocked down, but not out.



Clay pots are one of the most common found items during archaeological digs. They often aren't found complete, many are chipped, cracked or damaged, but there must be strength and stability in the material used to create the pot for it to survive hundreds of years under the ground.

I wonder what it is about a clay pot that helps it to withstand these pressures?

Maybe it was the choice of material, the loving care of the maker, or the protection of the soil around it?

This verse reminds Christians that despite their fragility, the treasure of God's life giving strength shines out of them filling them with hope, courage, guidance and wisdom.

As school leaders, you might be knocked down, crushed under pressure, rung out emotionally and spiritually, but look to this verse; **God has not forsaken YOU.**

For Christians they know that protection and loving care of God will help to rebuild, renew and strengthen them in these times of difficulty and trial.

'What makes you vulnerable, makes you beautiful.'

But the people who trust the Lord will become strong again.

They will be able to rise up as an eagle in the sky. **They will run without needing rest. They will walk without becoming tired.**

Isaiah 40:31 (ICB)

Our families & Our community

Managing the anxiety of those in our communities

'Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but empties today of its strength.'

Charles Spurgeon.

- How can we extend our culture of courageous vulnerability to our school community?
- Can we provide spaces for tough, loving conversations that help to address the issues rather than appease them?
- The anxiety these parents are demonstrating is usually linked to their past experiences. So, how as a school can we support parents through this?
- How could we listen more and ask 'What does support from us as a school look like?'
- It takes courage and trust in you for a parent to share their vulnerability with you. To strengthen this connection there needs to be mutual vulnerability. That doesn't mean you as the school leader over shares or pours your heart out, but showing empathy builds trust and deeper connection.
- How might having compassionate conversations diffuse an angry or hostile situation?
- Tell me about how you are feeling' 'I get it' or 'that must have been really hard for' or 'I'm sorry for how you have been treated, or for how you feel'?
- I wonder how you support each other when dealing with anxious parents?



GOING DEEPER/FURTHER RESOURCES

Find The Bible passages below:

Think about the birth of Jesus through the lens of vulnerability. Think of the characters in the story and what made them vulnerable, particularly Mary and Joseph.

Mary, mother of Jesus. Read Luke 2: 26-38 and verse 46-56

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+1&version=GNT>

How was Mary vulnerable in this part of the story? How did she cope with the knowledge that her son would be valuable to the world, but that she would also experience pain?

Luke 2: 34-35

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=GNT>

Think about Joseph's role in Jesus' life. Look at his reactions where he is told that Mary will give birth to Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25

Then look at his role in protecting Jesus and Mary, escaping to Egypt, living as refugees and not having a secure home:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+2&version=GNT>

Matthew 2:13-15

What do these texts and your thoughts on them help you to see about Jesus' vulnerability?

Read: 'DARE TO LEAD' by Brené Brown

Explore: www.daretolead.brenebrown.com – There are lots of practical resources and advice to deepen your understanding of being a courageous leader, who creates a culture of vulnerability, trust, innovation and creativity.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVD8YRgA-ck> This ½ hour talk by Brené is inspirational and explains how we can create a culture of trust and vulnerability in our classrooms.

www.brenebrown.com/daringclassrooms - Brené Brown has tailored her work on leadership to an education context.

