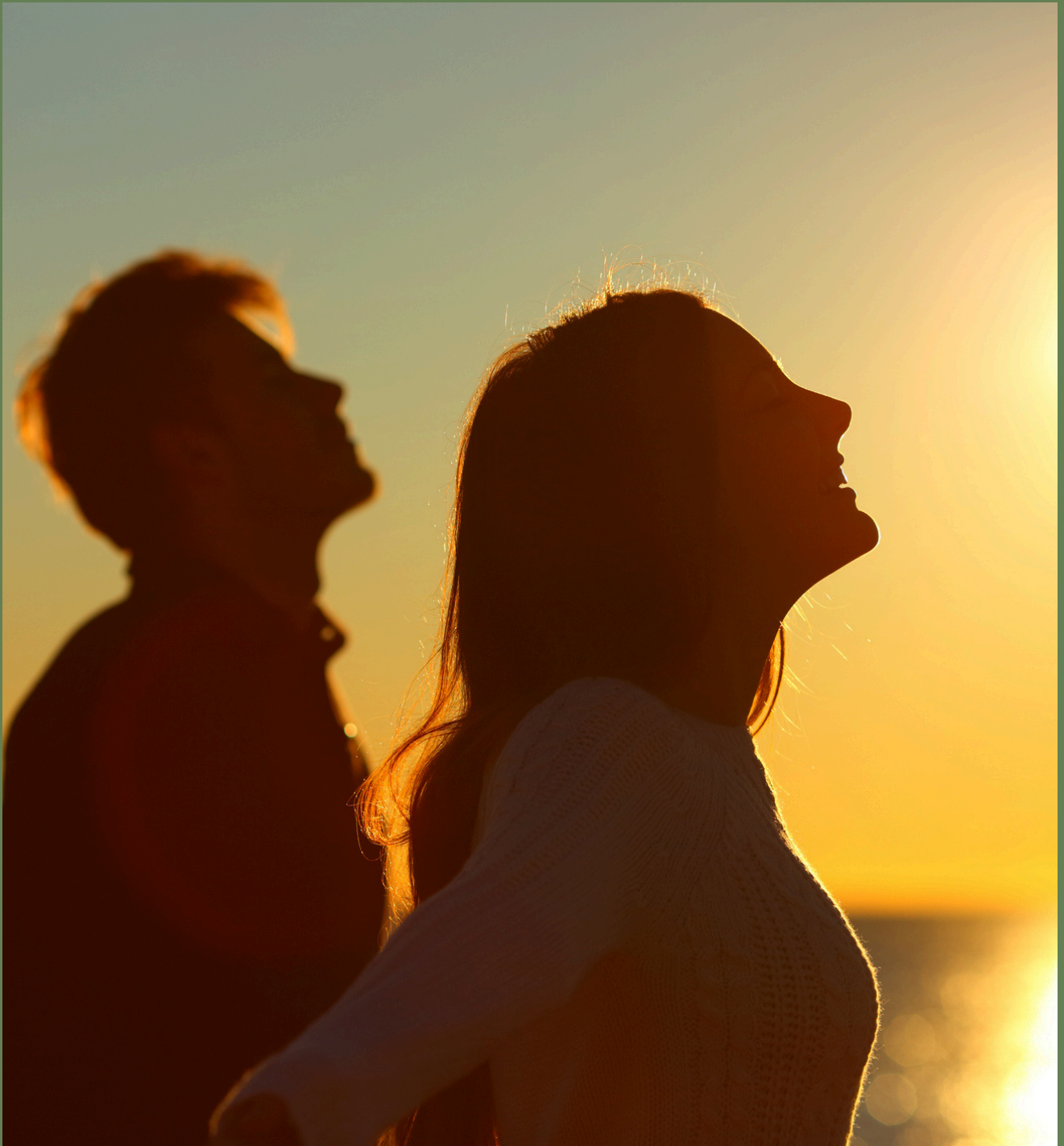


EMBRACING VULNERABILITY

IMPROVE YOUR EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

STOP HIDING WHO YOU REALLY ARE



CREATING BETTER CONNECTIONS

CHRISTY ROBERTS - CREATING CHANGE

WHEN WE SHUT OFF OUR PAIN AND VULNERABILITY, WE SHUT OFF THE PATH TO EMOTIONAL INTIMACY



EMBRACING VULNERABILITY

Christy Roberts - Mindset & Results Coach

For many of us, to be vulnerable means to be weak, fearful, hurt and open to betrayal. In western culture we've been raised that it's not polite, or socially acceptable, to display our emotions and pain. As a consequence,

*our society is full of adults that
hold, suppress and avoid
expressing their emotions and
don't know how to be vulnerable*

Don't get me wrong, this is not done intentionally. These are patterns of behaviour we've adopted from childhood because these behaviours and patterns worked back then and made sense to our young minds.

But, look around us. There are so many people in pain. Anxiety, stress, grief, overwhelm, burn out, trauma, addictions, sadness, guilt, shame, anger and more.

There are so many more people who are devoid of expressing emotion, who are numb, disconnected, misunderstood, lonely and suffering in silence.

So, why is this so important? It's important because **vulnerability is the pathway to emotional intimacy and connection.**

When we shut off our pain and vulnerability, we shut off the path to emotional intimacy, with our partner, our family and our friends.

We shut off that true feeling of being understood, worthwhile, loved and belonging.

My experience with vulnerability began at a young age. Like most of us, I learnt very early that it wasn't okay to express anger. In fact, I vividly recall from grade 1 an episode where my teacher punished me because I swore.

I was a typical 7 year old adventurous kid and I'd somehow trapped my legs in a fence and hurt both my knees. I was scared,

I was in pain and she was insisting I move when I physically couldn't.

In frustration, fear and pain I swore. Then I was humiliated and mortified further by being punished and put on display in front of my whole class by having to apologise and drink soapy water to wash out my mouth.

Now the outcome here could have been totally different had I been listened to and understood. Had I been shown how to healthily express my anger, instead of being punished for it.



I also learnt very early that it wasn't okay if I cried or was upset about something. Children were to be seen and not heard.

As a result, of my experiences, I learnt very early to shut these emotions off and not show this side of myself. That emotional expression isn't socially acceptable behaviour.

Subconsciously we label these emotions as negative and we suppress them. I stopped myself from feeling the pain of judgement. I didn't 'do' emotions like anger, and sadness.

I replaced these by simply not feeling, by being relaxed, easy going and focused on being happy and positive instead. I concluded that people like you more if you're happy and relaxed.

Now, of course, everyone will have their own unique experiences. While I coped by shutting my emotions down, others will have gone to the other end of the spectrum and become overly emotional. Either way, the same idea stands, we learn patterns in early childhood and then carry these into adulthood with us. The challenge here is that, as adults these patterns usually no longer serve us.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO SHARE WHAT WE'RE FEELING



Through mindset coaching I now understand how important it is that we feel, and I mean really feel, all our emotions.

When we don't feel it affects our internal world, our self belief, our health & wellbeing, our relationships. There are times when it's completely appropriate to feel angry, like when someone treats you badly. The key is to find healthy ways to express it.

When we are able to fully express ourselves emotionally and show our vulnerability, we open ourselves up to stronger bonds and connection with both ourselves and others.

We have a much greater awareness of our needs and can therefore more easily establish clear boundaries of how we like and need to be treated.

Virginia Satir's book – Our Many Faces, illustrates this perfectly. 'Each one of us has a medley of "faces" that composes our individual personality: intelligence, anger, love, jealousy, helplessness, courage and many more. We're often quick to

judge these characteristics as either positive or negative, without recognising that we need each of them in order to become fuller, more balanced human beings'.

For the last few years I have been stepping into embracing my vulnerability.

Finding the courage to step outside my comfort zone and express my emotions more fully.

It was hard at first. Intuitively there were times I knew I should be angry or sad, yet I couldn't actually connect and feel this. In many cases, I was numb.

I am finding that the more I practice tapping into these emotions, the more present they are for me. I realise now that it's healthy and completely normal to feel sad when something saddens you. Of course you feel sad.

It's healthy to embrace this authenticity, and it's healthy to connect to your inner soul and share your vulnerability with others.

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There is so much power in being seen and accepted this way. Being witnessed and held in your pain creates bonds of intimacy and connection, that are simply not there without it.

As I'm becoming more vulnerable, I'm noticing that my relationships with the people I care about are strengthening even more. It creates a sense of intimacy when you show up and are accepted for who you truly are, warts and all. I feel more real, more alive, more connected, more authentic than ever before. So, where do I begin?

To start you need to notice what you're feeling. Give it a name. Then fully own and accept that feeling.

Fully feel it. And once you've fully allowed yourself to feel the emotion, it will energetically release. The science of motion & energy is at work.

Sounds simple, right? Well, it is simple. Sure, it takes practice and time to get good at it, especially if you've suppressed for a long time.

Think of it like watching an awesome movie. In the beginning you are meeting the characters and not really drawn in, then by the end you feel like you know them and understand them, you feel what they feel.

I encourage you to lean into your vulnerability with courage and compassion.

Listen to your heart, be your authentic self. Give it a voice and share that voice.

There is power in truly knowing yourself, backing yourself and being yourself.

It's called Self Esteem and Self Worth.