

### 3: Live in brokenness & vulnerability

*"if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Cor 5:17)*

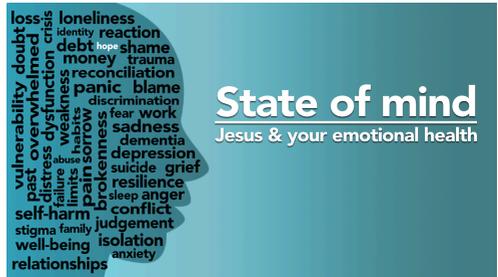
Emotionally healthy churches are made of people who know and admit their vulnerability and their struggles. Living with this knowledge creates people who are dependent on God and humble toward their brothers and sisters. Creating and encouraging an environment based on brokenness and dependence requires several key steps.

Everyone is broken, damaged, cracked and imperfect. It is a common thread of all humanity. Are we authentic enough to acknowledge this and ask Jesus to meet us in our brokenness and bring healing to our pain and strength to our weaknesses?

What stops us from being open and honest, vulnerable and weak towards others?

What holds you back from confessing sin to those who care about you? Usually it is down to trust. Do we trust others with that which we have kept secret and hidden?

Are we willing to speak freely of our mistakes, vulnerabilities and failures?



And are we compassionate and loving enough to encourage those who confess their vulnerabilities and failures to be made whole in Christ and allow that weakness to become a strength?

Read through the parable of the lost son (Luke 15:11-32).

What does this story say about living in brokenness and vulnerability?

What does this story say about the father's love?

What might we learn from the older brother about his attitude towards forgiveness and acceptance?

**"Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path."**

**– Brené Brown**

Discuss where you see yourself on the following table...

PROUD & DEFENSIVE	BROKEN & VULNERABLE
1. I am guarded and protective about my imperfections and flaws.	1. I am transparent and weak; I disclose myself to appropriate people.
2. I focus on the "positive," strong, successful parts of myself.	2. I am aware of the weak, needy, limited parts of who I am and I freely admit to failure.
3. I am highly "offendable" and defensive.	3. I am approachable and open to input.
4. I naturally focus first on the flaws, mistakes, and sins of others.	4. I am aware of my own brokenness. I have compassion and am slow to judge others.
5. I give my opinion a lot, even when I am not asked.	5. I am slow to speak and quick to listen.
6. I don't get close to people.	6. I am open and curious about others.
7. I keep people from really seeing what is going on inside me.	7. I delight in showing vulnerability and weakness, so Christ's power is seen.
8. I like to control most situations.	8. I can let go and give people the opportunity to earn my trust.
9. I have to be right in order to feel strong and good.	9. I understand that God's strength reveals itself in admitting mistakes, weakness, and statements that "I was wrong."
10. I blame others.	10. I take responsibility for myself and speak mostly in the "I," not the "you" or "they."
11. I often hold grudges and rarely ask forgiveness.	11. I don't hold people in debt to me, and I am able to ask others for forgiveness as needed.
12. When I am offended, I write people off.	12. When I am offended, I ask questions to explore what happened.
13. I deny, avoid, or withdraw from painful realities.	13. I honestly look at the truth underneath the surface, even when it hurts.
14. I give answers and explanations to those in pain, hoping to fix or change them.	14. I am present with people in their pain and am comfortable with Mystery and with saying, "I don't know."
15. I have to prove I'm right when wronged	15. I can let things go.
16. I am demanding.	16. I assert myself respectfully and kindly.
17. I am highly self-conscious and concerned about how others perceive me.	17. I am more aware of God and others than the impression I am making.
18. I see people as resources to be used for God.	18. I see people as gifts to be loved and enjoyed.