

Power in Vulnerability

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Below is an excerpt from my book *Models: Attract Women Through Honesty*. It's a dating advice book written for men, although many women find the concepts to be useful and important as well. This is the opening section of "Chapter 3: Power in Vulnerability." If you enjoy this, please consider purchasing the book.

When most men hear the word "vulnerability," their immediate reaction is to associate it with weakness. In general, men are raised to withhold their emotions, to not show weakness, and to ignore any hint of introspection. On top of that, most of the popular pickup advice out there encourages guys to be aloof, stand-offish, judgmental, and at times scathing towards women.

Men have a lot of negative assumptions about the ideas of being more vulnerable and opening up to their emotions. Chances are it makes you a little skeptical or queazy to see this chapter.

Don't worry, I'm not going to have you hold hands with some wimpy support group and recite lines like, "I love myself and am a happy person."

I want you to think of vulnerability in a more broad way. Not just emotional vulnerability (although we'll get to that), but physical vulnerability, social vulnerability.

For instance, making yourself vulnerable doesn't just mean being willing to share your fears or insecurities. It can mean putting yourself in a position where you can be rejected, saying a joke that may not be funny, asserting an opinion that may offend others, joining a table of people you don't know, telling a woman that you like her and want to date her. All of these things require you to stick your neck out on the line emotionally in some way. You're making yourself vulnerable when you do them.

In this way, vulnerability represents a form of power, a deep and subtle form of power. A man who's able to make himself vulnerable is saying to the world, "I don't care what you think of me; this is who I am, and I refuse to be anyone else." He's saying he's not needy and that he's high status.

Most people think of a man who's vulnerable as a man who cowers in the corner and begs others to accept him or not hurt him. This is not vulnerability, this is weakness and neediness.

Think of it this way, there are two men. One stands tall, looks straight ahead. Looks people in the eye when he speaks to them. Says what he thinks and is unconcerned with what others think of him. When he makes a mistake, he shrugs it off and maybe apologizes. When he sucks at something, he admits it. He's unafraid to express his emotions, even if that means he gets rejected. He has no problem moving on to people who don't reject him but like him for who he is.

Now, the second man hunches over, eyes dart around and is unable to look someone in the eye without getting uncomfortable. He puts on a cool persona that is always aloof. He avoids saying things that may upset others, and sometimes even lies to avoid conflict. He's always trying to impress people. When he makes a mistake, he tries to blame others or pretend like it didn't happen. He hides his emotions and will smile and tell everyone he's fine even when he's not. He's scared to death of rejection. And when he is rejected, it sends him reeling, angry, and desperate to find a way to win back the affection of the person who doesn't like him.

Which one of these two men is more powerful? Which one is more vulnerable? Which one is more comfortable with himself? Which one do you think women would be more attracted to?

Going back to the evolutionary perspectives we discussed in Chapter 1, vulnerability makes perfect sense as an indicator to women of a male's status and fitness. Let's say there's a tribe of 20 men, all hunter gatherers, all men with more or less equal possessions (or lack thereof).

Some of the men in the tribe are constantly reactive to what the other men tell them. They don't admit faults. They change their behavior and what they say to win the approval of the other men. When something doesn't go their way, they look to blame someone else. What would this say about their status in their tribe? If they're basing all of their behavior on the approval of the other men and are constantly covering for their weaknesses, it says that they're low status, not trustworthy, needy, and probably not going to be a dependable father.

Now imagine other men in the same tribe who are unfazed by the neediness or temper tantrums of the other men around them. They focus purely on their task at hand and don't change their behavior based on what others think of them. When challenged, they stand up for themselves, but when wrong they also admit their fault, as they see no reason to hide their weakness. They have a sense of honor. They don't react to any of the other men around them, rather, the other men react to him.

This behavior implies high status, a man who is dependable, comfortable in his strengths and weaknesses, a man who can be counted on and who is likely to rise through the ranks and provide for his family.

He's likely to succeed and likely to be a dependable father.

My belief is that women have been naturally selected to choose high-status men based on their behavior first, and then their looks and accomplishments second — as looks and accomplishments tend to be products of high-status behavior, not the other way around. This high-status behavior is a man who is comfortable with his vulnerability, who isn't afraid to express who he is, warts and all, to the world. This plays out in multiple arenas — in the life decisions he makes (Part III), the extent of his courage (Part IV) and the way he communicates to others (Part V).

Chances are, if you're reading this and are bad with women, then you're bad with women because you don't express your true feelings and intentions very well at all. Perhaps you're afraid to approach women you find attractive or ask them out on a date. Perhaps you consistently fall into boring conversation topics because they're "safe" and shallow and you don't have to risk offending or inciting anyone with them. Perhaps you're stuck in a job or lifestyle you don't truly enjoy, but because other people always told you that it was a good idea and you didn't want to upset or disappoint others. Perhaps you haven't exercised or groomed yourself to the extent that you could because you didn't want to stand out too much. Dressing extremely well makes you feel uncomfortable, smiling at strangers makes you feel creepy, and the idea of hitting on a woman openly scares you because of the possible rejection.

All of these are symptoms of a root problem: an inability to make yourself vulnerable.

Many men, like you, and like me, were raised in such a way as to not express our emotions freely. For whatever reason — maybe our home situation, maybe childhood trauma, maybe our parents didn't ever express their emotions either — we've grown up with habits embedded deeply into us to keep us stifled and bottled up. Don't be controversial. Don't be unique. Don't do anything "crazy" or "stupid" or "selfish."

I was the same way. My entire young life I was terrified of anyone not liking me. The mere thought of someone hating me, girl or guy, would literally keep me up at night. As a result,

every aspect of my life revolved around people-pleasing, hiding my faults, covering my tracks, blaming others. And needless to say, I barely had any success with women. And when I did finally get a girlfriend, she left my ass for a man who could actually express himself.

This all may sound hokey and new-agey. Trust me, it's not. Connecting with women in this way, by being vulnerable — as opposed to compensating or becoming a fake alpha — will result in the some of the best interactions and relationships of your life.

Vulnerability is the path of true human connection and becoming a truly attractive person. As Psychologist Robert Glover says: "Humans are attracted to each other's rough edges." Show your rough edges. Stop trying to be perfect. Expose yourself and share yourself without inhibition. Take the rejections and lumps and move on because you're a bigger and stronger man. And when you find a woman who loves who you are (and you will), revel in her affection.

But opening oneself up to vulnerability, training oneself to become comfortable with your emotions, with your faults, and with expressing oneself without inhibitions doesn't happen overnight. This entire book is kind of a how-to guide for vulnerability disguised as a seduction manual. But it's a process, and at times is a grueling one.