



Connected & Grounded

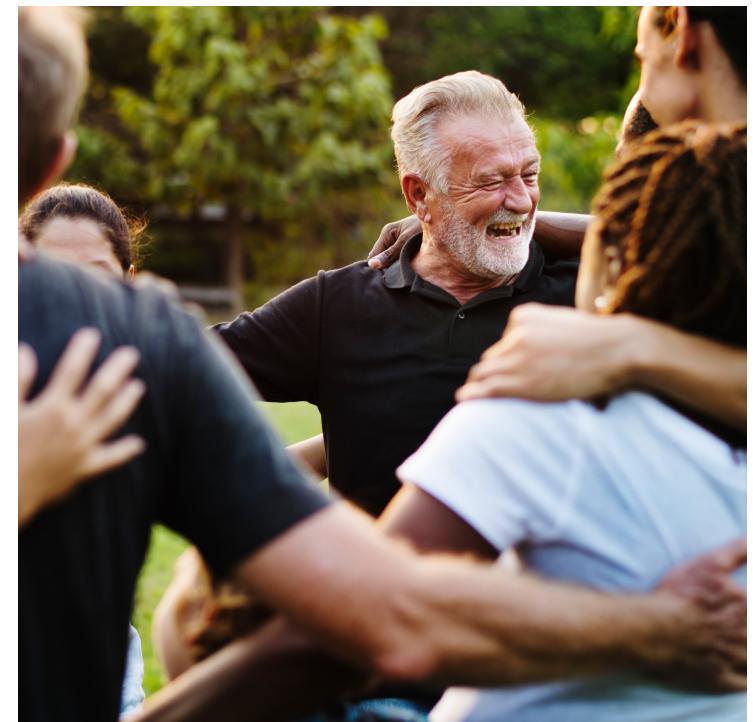
Session 2: Real Talk — Building Better Relationships

"We are born in relationship, we are wounded in relationship, and we heal in relationship." — Harville Hendrix

Strong relationships don't require perfection — just presence.

Even showing up imperfectly is powerful.
Presence matters more than perfection.

Who are you waiting to be “perfect” for before showing up?



How to Open Up Without Feeling Weak

- **Vulnerability ≠ weakness**
- **Choose safe spaces & safe people**
- **Start small — share one truth at a time**
- **Boundaries + openness can co-exist**

Think of a time someone's openness touched you. Was it weakness — or strength?



What a Healthy Male Connection Looks Like

Brotherhood, not competition

Truth, not performance

Presence, not perfection

Emotional presence is masculine strength

What kind of male relationships did you see growing up?

What kind do you want to create now?



The Value of Listening and Showing Up

Listening says: “You matter.”

Be the mountain — hold space, don’t fix.

Regular small gestures build deep trust.

When was the last time you truly listened without trying to fix?



Activity: Connection Mapping

Who Energizes You
vs. Who Drains You?

Left side: People who energize / uplift you

Right side: People who drain / deplete you

When do you feel most alive in connection? When do you shrink?

Practice: Active Listening Breakout

Active Listening Pairs

- Partner A speaks for 2 mins about any topic
- Partner B listens only — no fixing, no advice, just presence
- Switch after 2 mins

How did it feel to truly listen?

How did it feel to be truly heard?

This Week's Challenge

Reach out to one person intentionally this week.
No agenda. No fixing. Just presence and
connection.
A call, coffee, text, walk — what matters is
intention.



Closing Quote & Reflection

"At the deepest level of being, we do not want someone to solve us — we want someone to see us."

**Who will you truly see this week?
Who will you allow to truly see you?**



Books

Vulnerability & Connection

- Daring Greatly — Brené Brown (the gold standard on vulnerability)
- The Power of Vulnerability — Brené Brown (audio version highly recommended)
- The Gifts of Imperfection — Brené Brown

Healthy Masculinity & Relationships

- I Don't Want to Talk About It — Terrence Real (groundbreaking book on male depression & relationships)
- How to Be an Adult in Relationships — David Richo (beautiful, deep book on mature connection)
- Iron John — Robert Bly (poetic exploration of male initiation and relationships — a deeper read)

Communication & Listening

- The Lost Art of Listening — Michael Nichols
- Nonviolent Communication — Marshall Rosenberg (phenomenal for building deep trust and connection in any relationship)



Videos / Documentaries / Talks

TED Talks

- Brené Brown: The Power of Vulnerability → must-watch, engaging and deep
- Brené Brown: Listening to Shame
- Johann Hari: Everything You Think You Know About Addiction is Wrong → profound talk on connection and healing
- Esther Perel: Rethinking Infidelity → about relationships in a broader sense

Documentaries / Films

- The Mask You Live In (available on Amazon, Vimeo, and some educational platforms — powerful documentary about the challenges of modern masculinity and connection)
- Won't You Be My Neighbor? (the Fred Rogers documentary — profound lessons on presence, listening, kindness)
- HEAL (on emotional connection and wellness — available on Netflix/Prime)



Websites / Online Resources

- Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley
→ fantastic articles and practices on empathy, connection, vulnerability
- Brené Brown's Dare to Lead Hub → great resources on vulnerability, connection, leadership
- ManKind Project → programs and resources for men building healthy relationships and authentic masculinity



Bonus — Music

- Lean On Me — Bill Withers
- Bridge Over Troubled Water — Simon & Garfunkel
- Fix You — Coldplay
- Stand by Me — Ben E. King



Thank You & Q&A



Meditación

