Meaning Conference 2021 Summit Symposium: From Vulnerability to Resilience - Introduction

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• The human story is one of vulnerability, redemption, and resilience.
• As mortals, we all need a boundary or forbidden fruit to prevent us from crossing an invisible line.
• Disaster strikes when we forget our inherent vulnerability.
What contributes to resilience?

• This is one of the important themes for a new science of existential positive psychology.

• The pandemic is testing everyone’s resilience – it either breaks you or makes you stronger.

• We are proposing the paradoxical view that a sense of vulnerability is essential for our resilience.
Vulnerability is an existential reality

• No one is immune from vulnerability.
• Death is only a breath away.
• Every action exposes us to the risk of rejection or failure.
• It is often related low self-esteem, maladaptive cognitive reaction, and psychopathology.
• It is often interpreted as a weakness.
• Brené Brown (2012): “Vulnerability is also the birthplace of joy, belonging, creativity, authenticity, and love.”

• My weakness is my strength. It keeps me humble and reminds me of my need for help from others and from God. Thus, faith, hope, and love comes from our vulnerability.

• I’m working on the Vulnerability Awareness Scale (VAS) to investigate whether a healthy sense of vulnerability is a better predictor of resilience, mental health, and mature happiness.
• Resilience depends on having sufficient inner and external resources.
• Resilience also depends on effective coping strategies.