



Wellbeing Tips

Courage, boundaries, and loving yourself honestly



Exploring self-care through mindfulness with Brene Brown

We often think that putting ourselves first is selfish. Brené Brown's research tells a very different story. According to Brown, this work isn't about choosing ourselves instead of others, it's about choosing self-respect alongside connection. When we don't, resentment, burnout, and disconnection quietly take root.

One of her most well-known reminders is this: "Daring to set boundaries is about having the courage to love ourselves, even when we risk disappointing others." Mindfully putting yourself first begins with awareness. It's noticing when you're saying yes out of fear rather than alignment. It's listening to your bodies and reactions that tell you a boundary is needed long before words arrive. Brene Brown reframes boundaries as an act of kindness. Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind. When we're honest about our limits, people know where they stand and we stay connected without abandoning ourselves.

This practice also asks us to loosen our grip on perfectionism. Brown describes perfectionism not as healthy striving, but as self-protection or a shield against shame. Choosing yourself sometimes means allowing yourself to rest, decline, or do less, without earning it first.

A simple reflection can help:

- What am I feeling right now?
- Am I acting from love or fear?
- What boundary would honour my self-respect in this moment?

Putting yourself first will likely bring discomfort. Guilt may show up. So might the fear of disappointing someone else. But Brene Brown reminds us that discomfort is not failure; it's often the price of vulnerability. When we choose self-respect, we don't lose connection. We build braver, healthier relationships with ourselves and others. If you wish to explore the ideas presented here, please join our wellbeing activities such as our reoccurring writing through grief program at:

familiesofveterans.org.au/project/defence-families-wellbeing-events/