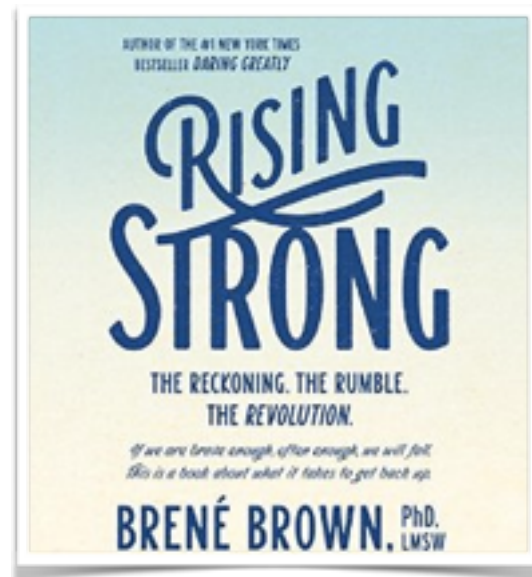


Acknowledge, Rewrite, Repeat

by Megan DeBolt

We all get to a point where we find ourselves unraveling until we've hit the ground with an audible "splat!" Maybe we've just been broken-up with or lost a loved one. We're disconnected or struggling with self-worth, or even identity. In times like these, it's often easier to give our misfortunes the power to keep us down. However, Dr. Brené Brown, coming from a place of empathy and compassion would tell us that we need to *rise from our falls, overcome our mistakes, and face hurt in a way that brings more wisdom and wholeheartedness into our lives.*

This is what Brown's most recent book, *Rising Strong*, explores. Brown explains the Rising Strong Process as it happens in three steps: the reckoning, the rumble, and the revolution. She explains that through this Rising Strong Process, we can get back up, overcome our own obstacles, and live our fullest lives.



Each inspirational step has to do with a different element of self-story. After we have fallen, Brown suggests that we have to get curious about our emotions, that we have to be active in the why's and how's of our own behavior and thoughts, and how our emotions influence them. She says we must *own our stories* and challenge our confabulations in order to *determine what's truth, what's self-protection*, and identify what we need to change. The final step is rewriting the ending to our

story based on what we have learned from owning, and going head to head with, our story. Brown believes that through this, *we can change how we engage with the world and ultimately transform the way we live, love, parent, and lead.*

Brown is an author who speaks *to* her readers, rather than *at* them. This is extremely imperative to getting her message across. Brown doesn't try and sway a reader with long, flowery words she only half-knows the definitions to. Rather, she gets on the reader's level and explains each and every finding in her research, often giving personal examples and accounts of every stage of the

process. It's also worth noting that Brown is no stranger to the concepts of vulnerability, courage, and worthiness. Dr. Brown has been conducting research on these subjects for thirteen years.



<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1300000/Brene-Brown-1300000.html>

Brown really embraces the power of vulnerability, through sharing personal accounts of her own rising strong process. This not only puts the reader in her position, but also allows the reader to experience the process firsthand and see where Brown herself has had to acknowledge her emotions and rumble with her own confabulations. Through being vulnerable with her readers, Brown shows that when put into action, this

process, though excruciating at times, really works.

Brown doesn't stop there! She continues to explain how very diverse our "falls" can be, and in turn emphasizes the importance of rising strong. She covers everything from heartbreak to privilege, shame to identity. Brown highlights the interconnectedness of these experiences and explores *why* we get stuck in these "falls", *why* we constantly obsess over them, and *why* we are experiencing what we are feeling and reflecting on how it is causing us to react to our surrounding world.

In the final chapter of her book, Brown leaves the reader with a challenge. She asks *what if we were able to acknowledge our own hurt and pain, and in doing so made sure not to diminish the hurt and pain of others?* Being aware of our own issues and not simplifying the complexities of others' lives is a common theme found throughout *Rising Strong*. In one chapter, Brown shares a frustrating story about conference she was hesitant to speak at and the roommate from hell she was given during her stay. She shares her frustration and when she finally gets to see her therapist she is told that *Maybe people are doing the best they can* which causes Brown to do some therapeutic research. Brown asks various people if they really think that people are doing the best they can do, and has some really insightful results. Brown comes to realize that we need to stop *loving people for who they could be and start loving them for who they are*. Of every finding in her book, I found this to be the most poignant. How many times a day do we walk by someone, or get annoyed by our friends/family/partners and wish they could 'get over it' rather than meeting them where they are, and accepting them as they try to get back up?

Rising Strong

Brené Brown

Penguin Random House LLC

280 Pages

Rivers End Bookstore

\$27.00

We all fall sometimes; it's nice to know that there is a lot out there worth getting up for. If you are someone who believes in living their life as wholeheartedly and as fully as you can, I urge you to purchase this book. As Brown writes, *We could rise strong together*.

To learn more about the amazingly inspiring Brené Brown visit her blog: <http://brenebrown.com/>

Megan DeBolt is an English and Creative Writing student at SUNY Oswego. She enjoys drinking tea, writing poetry, and petting cats in her free time. She believes strongly in the power of vulnerability and healing through writing.