Professional
Reading Program
Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

DUTY
RESPECT
INTEGRITY

Dare to Lead by Brené Brown

Why Read *Dare to Lead*?

"Leadership is not about titles, status, or wielding power. A leader is anyone who takes responsibility for recognizing the potential in people and ideas, and has the courage to develop that potential."

"The skill sets that make up courage are not new; they've been aspirational leadership skills for as long as there have been leaders. Yet we haven't made great progress in developing these skills in leaders, because we don't dig into the humanity of this work – it's too messy."

Dare to Lead takes a different approach than many leadership books, and will probably challenge some of your ideas about what makes a good leader as it dives into the human factors that are at the root of all good leadership. It's likely that there are good leaders all around you exhibiting the kinds of behaviors discussed in this book, consciously or unconsciously. In wildland fire leadership, research is starting to show that there are a set of behaviors and beliefs that drive what firefighters call good leadership, but are often not acknowledged, or even explicitly identified. After reading the book, go to https://daretolead.brenebrown.com/ for a deeper dive into Daring Leadership, including a survey, workbooks, and videos.

There are several videos related to the book available online. Find some of them at the links below or by searching in any internet-based search engine.

- **"Dare to Lead": Brené Brown says vulnerability is the "only path to courage" (6 minutes):**
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEnqV_M_Dm4

- **The power of vulnerability | Brené Brown (20 minutes):**
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzlF7o

- **Dare to Lead + LinkedIn = Global Read-Along (set of short Q&A videos by the author)**
  https://daretolead.brenebrown.com/linkedin-read-along-series/

For more leadership ideas and to dig deeper, check out the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP) blog, Facebook page, Professional Reading Program, and more at the links below:

Blog: http://wildlandfireleadership.blogspot.com/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/WFLDP

Professional Reading Program: https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp/toolbox/prp

Main WFLDP page: https://www.fireleadership.gov

Dare to Lead Discussion Questions

Part One, Section One: The Moment and the Myths

What was your definition of, and take on, vulnerability before reading this section? How about after? What are some examples of "good" vulnerability that you see in wildland fire leadership? How have you seen the vulnerability myths show up in your workplace?

Part One, Section Two: The Call to Courage

How good are you at communicating with the "clear is kind, unclear is unkind" mindset? What did you think about Col. Halfhill's example in this section? Are there any parallels with the wildland fire service? What did you think about the words and phrases used in the 1948 Air Force Leadership Manual? Do you hear and/or use those words and phrases often in your workplace and leadership conversations? Should you?

Part One, Section Three: The Armory

What "armored leadership" examples resonated with you? Are there any of those that you need to work on? Are there any of the corresponding "daring leadership" examples that you do well? What examples stood out to you, as a leader? As a follower?

Part One, Section Four: Shame and Empathy

Did the author's concussion example of "unwanted identity" – sick, unreliable, undependable – sound familiar in any way? How does the wildland fire service demonstrate similar cultural values? Could that cause problems? How is practicing empathy (by using the techniques listed) an important leadership skill?

Part One, Section Five: Curiosity and Grounded Confidence

Why is it so important to identify and then practice fundamental leadership skills, much like we practice fundamental wildland fire skills? Why do you think that curiosity is a good leadership skill to practice?

Part Two: Living Into Our Values

Why is it important as a leader or follower to know your values? What are your central values? How do you live those values? How are you at feedback conversations? How can you work toward assuming positive intent with those around you?

Part Three: Braving Trust

What do you think about the seven elements of trust? How well do you perform in those elements? Did any of the elements surprise you? Why is trust building, and understanding the process, so important to leaders and followers? What did you think of the concept of trust being like a jar of marbles?

Part Four: Learning to Rise

Why might it be important to practice failure, and how to recover from it as a leader and follower? What are some things you can do to be a "riser?" What story traps have you found yourself in? How can storytelling interfere with (or improve) your situational awareness?