



Video Module: Vulnerability

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Hello. Your story unleashed. I am April Bell and I am your co guide with Rumi Tsuchihashi and I am excited and delighted to be here with you. You know, as I have gone out and talk to people about personal storytelling over the years, I've also often been asked, you know, what's the secret sauce to telling a good story?

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And people aren't always super excited when I let them know that in my opinion, the thing that really makes a wonderful and engaging story is vulnerability.

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Vulnerability can be a tricky subject to navigate. And so I'm going to spend a little time talking to you about the different ways that I've gone about that other people have gone about it, that I've talked to over the years,

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and some of the ways that we can consider about being discerning when telling, when deciding how vulnerable we want to be in a situation. Any time that I'm going to step out and be a little vulnerable in my story, I am always

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a little nervous. It's a bit edgy. And then also when I have interviewed people and I can tell that they are feeling a little bit vulnerable, it's so interesting because then the thing that happens next is what they share is often the thing that I think and others view as the most incredible and amazing part of their story.

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But for them, oftentimes it's the thing that they're nervous and hesitant to share because they're afraid like, Oh, this is going to make me look stupid. Or, you know, I made this really bad decision. I don't know if I want people knowing this, but the thing is, is that



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it's showing that you know who you really are inside.

And then the choices that we made and then the result of those choices that people really connect with and when you feel that little bit of edginess about that detail that you're going to share, then you know that you're tapping in to that bit of vulnerability that is that piece that could make your story amazing.

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So inside that vein, what I often talk to people about is to like to really be discerning. So it depends as who are you sharing this story with? in this course, we're working on finding those core stories that we can use in a professional setting. So, you know, it kind of creates a different kind of audience than if we were with friends or family

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So it's really up to you and how you decide about how much that you want to share. The one big piece of guidance that I give is that if that vulnerable thing, if you haven't worked it out for yourself enough, if there's still like a really hard charge attached to it, then make sure that you practice sharing that story with people that you feel really safe sharing with, like in this community or with anybody that's really, you know, a close, trusted ally in your life and then, you know, test it out to them.

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And then if that goes well, then, you know, you can keep kind of branching out further and further and further. And you might be surprised that the reactions that you get. Years and years ago, I was at a talk for a local author, Mike Robbins, and it was a local event and there was a lot of people in the room and he was talking about his new book.

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And then as part of his talk, he shared what he called the iceberg exercise and the way that he did it. So with this is like you kind of like drop the water line, little by little to show a little bit more of who you really are. So to demonstrate, he said, you know, if you really knew me, you know that I'm really grateful to be here with all of you today.



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And then he said, If you really, really knew me, you know that I'm married. And I we have a daughter and we have another one on the way. And when he said that, I was like, Oh, that's interesting. We're here to listen to him talk about his business book. I wasn't expecting him to talk about his personal life, but I did kind of like knowing that about him.

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And then he said, If you really, really knew me, you'd know that I'm actually kind of nervous to be up here in front of you. All right now. I mean, what if what I'm saying doesn't make any sense or you're not interested at all in my book and that one kind of stopped me in my hex because I thought that, you know, the way that he was presenting himself, like he seemed like he totally had it all together.

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He was seemed completely relaxed and sharing stories. And in reality, he was nervous, just like I would have been. And I really like knowing that about him. Well, a few years later, I actually ended up working with him in a coaching relationship, and he directed me to do some professional growth and development work.

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and in doing that workshop I created that I what what I wanted for myself. My life and my work was to be the possibility of love and connection. So a few more years go by and I am going to a networking lunch

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my coaching homework for the week was to stand inside my possibility of being the space of love and connection. No matter what. So I arrive to the restaurant that we're having the networking lunch at and I'm going in and I'm like, okay, I am going to be the possibility of love and connection no matter what.

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And so we everybody we sit down is this really nice white tablecloths. We're out on the patio. Is this beautiful atrium. It's a spring day. There's blossoms on the plum tree, the fruit trees outside, the sunlight coming in. And there's about nine people. And we're all sitting around this table. And the main person that was leading the meeting, she says,



you know, that we're all going to go around and introduce ourselves and it's it's your usual cast of characters at one of these networking lunch.

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You know, there's a there's a real estate agent, there's an insurance broker, there's an estate attorney. You know, all these different, you know, kind of professional folks out in the community. And then there was me. And I could tell by the way that the table was set up and when the first person went that I was going to be last.

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And so when the first person, when, you know, they dove in, they gave their elevator speech and then their ideal client summary, and one by one each person was doing this and I was like, Oh my gosh, am I going to, you know, am I going to chicken out and just do my elevator speech or my idea client summary, or am I going to be the possibility of love and connection?

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I'm going to be real.

So it's finally my turn and with my heart pounding. But outwardly appearing to be as cool as a cucumber, I let them know that I'm going to do something a little bit different. And so I start doing the iceberg exercise that if you really know me.

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So I said, If you really knew me, you'd know that I'm really passionate about my business. Creating life story videos for people. If you really, really knew me, you'd know that what I love about it the most is the impact that my deep listening and presence has on those that I have the privilege to interview.

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And if you really, really, really knew me, you'd know that in my younger days I didn't always feel listened to or heard.

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And it's such a gift for me that I get to give that to others.



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I could tell that they weren't exactly sure what to think about the new tack that I had taken, but they seemed to be receiving everything okay. And even though I was a bit terrified that they all thought it was a little bit that I said that instead of so I said next.

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Instead of spending the rest of my time talking about my business, what I would like to do is for each of us to go around the table and for each person to have an opportunity to share something that that's really important to them that they're passionate about. It can be professional or personal, but I'd like each of us to take a few minutes sharing about what's important in our life.

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And then the miraculous happened one by one each person leaned in and chose to share something personal about themselves,

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and it was just beautiful to watch them open like one of the spring blossoms on the trees just outside the atrium.

And instead of being at a lunch with a group of people that were halfway or maybe completely wondering when this obligation was going to be over, what happened was, is that it turned into a group of nine people connecting in a real and personal way, getting to know each other.

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If you really knew me, you know that I'm grateful that I had the courage to be my true self that day.

If you really, really knew me, you'd know that What I learned

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was that by being my true self and stepping outside of a box, I didn't want to be in in the first place.

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I gave others permission to do the same.



if you really, really, really knew me, you'd know that being the possibility of love and connection can still terrify me to this day.

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But just maybe if I keep showing you my heart, you'll be willing to show me yours to.

So by no means am I suggesting that you go to every business lunch and get everybody to do the iceberg exercise? Although I would think that that was kind of awesome. But what I. Why I am telling you that story is that

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sometimes when you just take that little bit of risk, what's on the other side of it can be really beautiful and magical.

So anyway, that's what I have to say today. On the topic of vulnerability, I hope it inspires you a little bit to explore your own comfort zone and how you're willing to be vulnerable in your storytelling. And maybe you'll go out and start pushing those edges a little bit and being a little bit more vulnerable in your conversations and seeing what kind of reactions that you get and think a little bit more about how you can infuse that vulnerability inside of the stories that you choose to craft and tell.