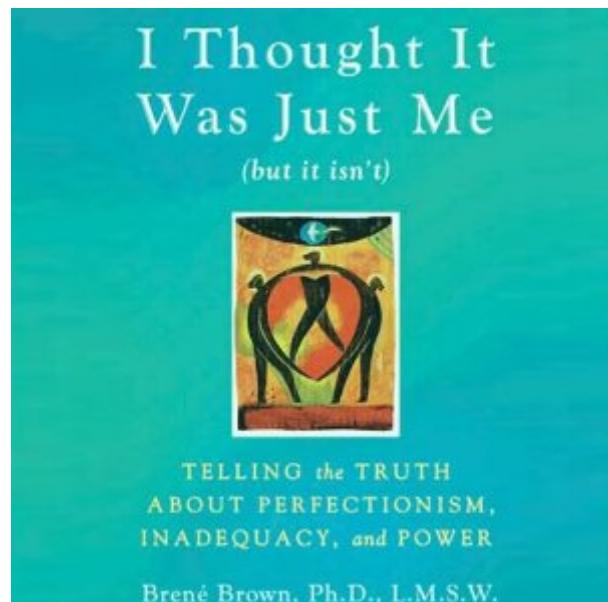


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# I Thought It Was Just Me (but It Isn't): Telling The Truth About Perfectionism, Inadequacy, And Power



## **Synopsis**

The quest for perfection is exhausting and unrelenting. We spend too much precious time and energy managing perception and creating carefully edited versions of ourselves to show to the world. As hard as we try, we can't seem to turn off the tapes that fill our heads with messages like, Never good enough! and What will people think? Why? What fuels this unattainable need to look like we always have it all together? At first glance, we might think its because we admire perfection, but that's not the case. We are actually the most attracted to people we consider to be authentic and down-to-earth. We love people who are real; we're drawn to those who both embrace their imperfections and radiate self-acceptance. There is a constant barrage of social expectations that teach us that being imperfect is synonymous with being inadequate. Everywhere we turn, there are messages that tell us who, what, and how were supposed to be. So, we learn to hide our struggles and protect ourselves from shame, judgment, criticism, and blame by seeking safety in pretending and perfection. Based on seven years of ground-breaking research and hundreds of interviews, I Thought It Was Just Me shines a long-overdue light on an important truth: Our imperfections are what connect us to each other and to our humanity. Our vulnerabilities are not weaknesses; they are powerful reminders to keep our hearts and minds open to the reality that we're all in this together. As Dr. Brown writes, "We need our lives back. It's time to reclaim the gifts of imperfection - the courage to be real, the compassion we need to love ourselves and others, and the connection that gives true purpose and meaning to life. These are the gifts that bring love, laughter, gratitude, empathy and joy into our lives."

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

i have been going through major depression on and off for 7 years. i kept trying to just "get rid" of the symptoms. this last bout had me in my bed for months, not eating, not having a will to live. yes, very extreme.i, all along, have had the strength to at least read and learn. i figured i'd die trying to heal and get to the bottom of this illness. this book came along at the perfect time for me. i had had a sneaking feeling that shame was a huge part of my problems, but didn't know how to deal with this, or what it actually meant, or how it was affecting my life, and my thinking.Her book is a true gift; a treasure. not only is this book full of wisdom that warmed my heart, it's full of lots of hard work on her part to be as accurate as possible about something (shame) that seems so subtle and elusive. she nailed it! (her writing is style is very conversational, and easy to understand as well)So much of this information sunk into my soul, and has healed me in many ways. On top of providing other's real and raw accounts of shame, and trying to be perfect.....yet remaining miserable, the author helps to build up our strength by showing us ways to not let shame take us down! that it's a learning process, but we really can change in small yet extremely significant ways. the thing is: if we don't know that it's shame.....we will stay stuck in our misery! this book is a key to unlock freedom to live our unique lives, because she calls it out....she speaks out!i'm not saying i'm cured from my depression. but i will say that i am quite a few rungs up the ladder from the pit i was in. and this is largely due to the women speaking truth and reality in this book, and the author's candor.i'm thankful for this author.

To be perfectly upfront, I would like to acknowledge that I am a friend and colleague of the author, BrenÃ© Brown. But also to be perfectly upfront, I would really appreciate her book even if I was not.This book is powerful in its scope and impact as it lays out what shame is, how women respond to shame, and how women can respond differently to shame in order to become shame resilient.BrenÃ© helps women identify what their shame triggers are, how to develop a critical awareness about how shame is impacted by larger forces in our lives, such as media images of extremely thin and beautiful women, how women can reach out to others, and how to learn to "speak shame."As BrenÃ© was writing the book and I was reading early drafts, I was already learning to apply her concepts to my life. For instance, previously when I experienced a shameful moment I would curl up in a little ball of pain, constantly replay the shaming incident in my head, castigate myself over and over, and then wait for the passage of time to relieve some of my

symptoms, although even years later I could get flashbacks of the event and the accompanying pain. Today, due to BrenÃ© and her book, I react very differently. I call multiple friends and share my painful story and seek out comfort, caring, and empathy. I begin to "contextualize" the shameful event, that is, I see how political, economic, and social forces have shaped my personal experiences. For instance, that expectation that women must be "superwoman" juggling kids, work, partners" perfectly, which is an unreasonable expectation that no woman can live up to. That helps put my experience into context and allow me to see the broader picture.

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