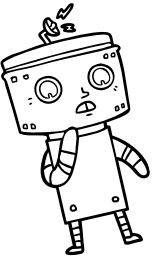# Vulnerability:
Name it to Tame it

Ok, so what is it?

Vulnerability is the emotion we experience during times of **uncertainty**, when something **feels risky**, or we feel **emotionally exposed.**

So, how does it work?

Something happens to make you feel **unsure or exposed.**
For example, an academic struggle, a weird social interaction, an embarrassing moment, trying to figure out how to stand up for yourself, a fight with someone close to you, etc

When we feel **unsure or exposed**, we feel **vulnerable**. Our brains do not like feeling this way, brains like to know things and be certain. So vulnerability can feel weird and uncomfortable.
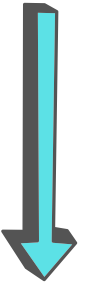
So, then here we are, **feeling our feelings** and looking around like a Meerkat.
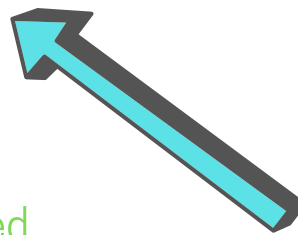
We might be feeling anxious, scared, embarrassed, nervous, or sad. We might also be feeling excited, curious, engaged, thrilled, or happy.

That's the funny thing about Vulnerability, **it's like a diving board** because it's the jumping off point for all kinds of emotions, **both hard and fun.**

Vulnerability turns up the volume on **doubt**, which amplifies **anxiety** and creates **stress.**

What's a Meerkat? They are small mammals that are highly social and live in groups of up to 30 called Mobs. They stand on their hind legs and keep watch at all times for threats so they can protect themselves and their community. **Our brains are a whole lot like Meerkats**
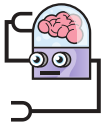
Megan Saxelby- 2019

THINKING ABOUT VULNERABILITY

When you are feeling vulnerable, how do you usually respond?

THINKING ABOUT VULNERABILITY

How can the way we process vulnerability impact our social interactions and relationships?

Vulnerability is awesome and can also suck. Some things to think about:

- **Vulnerability is the root of connection. Understanding how you respond when you feel vulnerable can help you feel more in control of your emotions, reactions, responses, and relationships.**

- **Some things in life make us feel vulnerable because they are unsafe. However, some things make us feel vulnerable because they are moments for growth. Learning to grapple with the difference between the two is super important.**

- **Learning to name the feelings we have helps us better manage stress and respond in the moment. If we know what is going on, we can calm down the parts of our brains that don't like uncertainty and manage vulnerable moments easier.**

- **Figuring out how to be cool with vulnerability turns you into a badass. You are less likely to do things just to please others, more likely to stand up for your boundaries, and are stronger in the face of any challenge because you know what emotion is at the root of your temporary discomfort.**