



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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## **BRENÉ BROWN SAYS LEADERS SHOULD DISCUSS THE ELECTION IN THE WORKPLACE**

### **More Than 13,000 People Attend 2022 two-day Texas Conference for Women**

AUSTIN, Nov. 9, 2022 – Speaking the day after the midterm elections, Dr. Brené Brown rhetorically asked participants of the 2022 Texas Conference for Women: “If you were at the office today, how many think you’d be talking about the elephant in the room – the election?”

“Here’s the problem,” she continued. “We say don’t talk about the election. Don’t talk about COVID. Don’t talk about masks. And in the same breath, we say bring your whole self to work. Emotions are OK. You’re a whole person. Don’t compartmentalize.”

So, which is it? she asked. Then added: “The bottom line is daring leaders excavate what no one is talking about. We don’t talk *about* people. We talk *to* people. We don’t dance around the elephant in the room. We invite the elephant to tea.”

She observed that many leaders fail to talk about hot-button topics in the workplace because they don’t know how to have the conversation or are afraid that they can’t control it or fix it. But a simple step is starting a meeting with a two-word check-in about what people are feeling.

More than 13,000 people registered for the 2022 Texas Conference for Women, a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to advancing women in the workplace. For the first time in its 23-year history, the Conference is being held in-person and virtually over two days to help women connect in whatever ways feel most comfortable to them now.

Today’s event, held at the Austin Convention Center, also featured José Andrés, Chef, Humanitarian & Founder of World Central Kitchen, and Tsedal Neeley, virtual work and organizational change expert and Harvard Business School professor. Photos are available on request.

In a conversation with *60 Minutes* Correspondent Sharyn Alfonsi, Chef José Andrés said that while people like him receive a lot of attention in the media, the people who actually do the most work of feeding the world are women.

He also suggested that to meet the complexity of problems today, people need to focus less on planning and more on adaptation.

“Planning is not a good way to proceed because when things don’t go as planned, what happens? We freeze,” he said.

“We need to embrace the complexities of the moment. The complexities of the moment are what give you the opportunity to say I am in charge and adapt and adapt and adapt,” he said, adding: “Throw out your plans, and the world will dramatically and completely change. Adaptation always wins the day.”

Tsedal Neeley, virtual work and organizational change expert and Harvard Business School professor, spoke about the importance of mastering digital shifts in today’s workplaces.

“COVID accelerated the virtualization of work, but it is also accelerated the digital transformation of work,” Neeley said.

It is now essential that leaders think about technology, data, AI, bots, privacy cybersecurity, and all the ways digital is at the forefront of everything we do, she said.

“Ultimately, the people with the digital mindset,” she added, “will be the people leading those without a digital mindset.”

The theme for this year’s conference is “Reset. Renew. Reconnect,” recognizing the extraordinary challenges women have overcome in recent years, months, and weeks -- and the power of coming together as a community of women supporting women.

### **Thursday’s Virtual Event**

Thursday’s virtual event will again feature Dr. Brené Brown plus Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, award-winning author, Selena Gomez, actor, producer, philanthropist & cofounder of Wondermind, Shoshana Johnson, the first Black female POW In U.S. War History & a Purple Heart Recipient.

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