

50 Acts of Courage



Manifesting your personal vision, your remarkable life, requires courage. Without courage all other virtues would be obsolete. It takes courage to know and live your virtues on a day to day basis.

This exercise builds on the exploring values exercise from Module 1, the letter to your Remarkable Future Self from Module 2 and your Life Plan from Module 3.

Action by you is required.

Courage is a muscle that needs exercise

Like all muscles, when you haven't used it for a while it's a good idea to start slowly – don't begin on Day 1 with a 42 km marathon; walk to the end of your street first.

There are a squillion way to practice courage, and you will know what tests you the most. I've found the most effective ways are with a nudge or a tweak. Not a gigantic leap into the dark and unknown, but a small skip into the grey but vaguely familiar ambiguity. Mind you, sometimes a giant leap is exactly what's needed.

Our courage often seems to desert us in the face of fear. The antonyms of fear are *calm* and *confidence*, two things you have been working consistently to build into your life with this program. With each action taken, a small fear is overcome, a new experience is made, and self confidence grows. Satisfaction, pride and joy also grow. Your awareness of yourself worth expands.

At it's core, courage is about strengthening your relationship with yourself. This deeper type of courage...

"...makes you stronger with each move you make. It makes you fall in love with yourself. It makes you fall in love with your (remarkable) life."

~ Christine Kane ~

There are 3 key ways to think about expressing courage in your life. Look at each of the ways and try the accompanying action.

1. Feeling the fear yet choosing to act anyway

"Courage is about doing what you're afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you're scared. Have the courage to act instead of react."

~ Oliver Wendell Holmes ~

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Choose one of the actions from your life plan or the list below, and do it, simple as that.

Following your heart

"It takes courage ... to endure the sharp pains of self discovery rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives."

~ Marianne Williamson ~

Go back and look at what you wrote for the "Why am I here?" exercise. Introduce yourself to a stranger using the words you wrote. Or write, and publish, a blog or video about the words and how they work in your life. Or start a conversation with "I feel..." Or go back to your top 5 values, and write a blog or journal about how you could practice living your values more courageously.

2. Persevering in the face of adversity

"A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer."

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson ~

Next time you're ready to pack in, or give up on whatever courageous act you're in the middle of – keep at it for 20 seconds more. It's about the time required for you to take 3 long, slow, deep breaths. Then give it another shot: respond don't react.

And here's what else you could do:

For the next 30 days, try one thing from the list below every day, or use your list from your life plan. Journal what happens. What did you try? Why? How did you feel?

Some of the list below may seem silly, but if they make you uncomfortable, and kick you out of your comfort zone, then give them a try. This will help you consciously build your courage muscle so that when you need it for a big moment, it's strong and ready.

Thanks to [Christine Kane](#) for these suggestions.

1. If you're always spontaneous, plan something in advance and stick with it. If you're a meticulous planner, do something spontaneous.
2. Start a blog, words or pictures and post every day for 30 days.
3. Have a massage.
4. Take a painting class.
5. Begin yoga or pilates.
6. Do something ridiculously tourist-y in your own town.
7. Get up in the morning after having a bad day yesterday. Encourage yourself to begin again.
8. Look into people's eyes when you're in public – on the street, buying groceries, etc.
9. Hire someone to do a regular task you can't stand doing. (i.e., mowing the lawn.) Use that time to write or draw.

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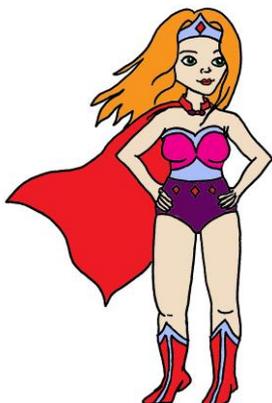
- 10.** Play music more. Watch TV less.
- 11.** Join a group, a class, a book club, a sports team. Don't worry if it's the "right" one – just try it out.
- 12.** Go vegetarian (for at least 30 days), if you are already; then go vegan.
- 13.** Pay for the coffee of the person behind you in the line.
- 14.** Run for President or Secretary of a local committee.
- 15.** Put on a goofy smile and look at other drivers when you stop at lights.
- 16.** Write a novel in a month.
- 17.** Think of one thing you'd love to ask one of your heroes, and then call her office – and ask her the question. (The goal is not necessarily to get through – but to let go of the fear of not getting through!)
- 18.** Ask for what you want – rather than complaining about not getting it.
- 19.** Go bowling.
- 20.** Invite friends over once a month for dinner.
- 21.** Teach a workshop on something you know how to do.
- 22.** Start a mastermind group with at least two other people.
- 23.** Learn to invest your money.
- 24.** Decide that your desire to be happy is an adequate reason to say no to requests of your time.
- 25.** Be bad at something. Do it anyway.
- 26.** Make requests. Don't complain.
- 27.** Join a writer's group.
- 28.** Hire a life coach, or a fitness coach.
- 29.** In a social situation, sit in one place and allow people to come talk with you instead of running around the room "networking."
- 30.** Worry less. Act more.
- 31.** Enter a writing contest.
- 32.** Start your own business or start another one.
- 33.** Ask someone out on a date.
- 34.** Eat at an ethnic restaurant you never considered before.
- 35.** Respond. Don't react.
- 36.** Get some music from another culture. Sit down and listen. Really listen.

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- 37.** Listen more. Talk less. Especially to your kids. (Remember that listening doesn't mean waiting to say your piece.)
- 38.** Start a group in real life – like a book club.
- 39.** Test-drive a luxury car. Act as if you could buy it if you wanted it.
- 40.** End a relationship that drains you or hurts you. You deserve to be happy.
- 41.** Go to an aged care home, and visit people who need company.
- 42.** Quit smoking.
- 43.** Take different routes to work each day.
- 44.** Get lost on purpose.
- 45.** Wake up at 5am and write in your journal.
- 46.** Assumptions are the enemy of success. Question them often.
- 47.** Excuses are the enemy of action. Stop making them.
- 48.** Admit when you are wrong.
- 49.** Write a fan letter to someone who's not famous – a teacher, a grocery store clerk – anyone who delights you or touches you.
- 50.** Pick one incomplete in your life (cluttered attic, article you want to write, craft you want to begin) and do it for 15 minutes a day. It's more courageous to do something for a small chunk of time and do it again the very next day – than it is to sit back and say it can't be done because you don't have enough time.

And of course, don't let these be the only things on your list, this is just the beginning.



*History, despite the wrenching pain,
cannot be unlived, but if faced with
courage, need not be lived again."*

~ Maya Angelou ~