



# The Courageous Living Guide

courage + integrity + passion + power



reframe your relationship with fear + practice courage + live 100% fully alive

by  
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# The Courageous Living Guide

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**Formatting note ::** Yes, I love trees--and--Print this. Three-hole punch it. Put it in a binder. Then start marking it up.

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## The **STORY** behind this **GUIDE**

**In 2009, I decided to expand the one-on-one coaching practice that I'd had since 2006--retreats, workshops, speaking engagements, e-courses--I was excited and fired up to create all of it!**

I created an **e-course called The Courageous Year** that started in 2010. This e-course was a digital hub for members to come and connect online. Lessons were posted daily or near-daily, and there were four modules--with each module spanning one quarter of a year.

As The Courageous Year progressed, the feedback I received was fantastic--however, I found that having set up a course that would take an entire year, this meant...no breaks! I was also constantly tied to the marketing process, enrolling ever more people in new courses so that we could "keep up with" the "year-long" schedule.

**I decided that I would turn The Courageous Year into four digital, downloadable e-programs called "The Courageous Living GuideS" (plural!).** They were individually titled Courageous Beginnings, Courageous Commitments, Courageous Passion and Courageous Power. They debuted in January 2011.

Over the course of 2011, I learned that these four individual programs, powerful though they might be, were too much for most people to digest when they arrived at my website. I received feedback that people were uncertain of *which* Guide to choose or where to start. I also found that with more offerings on my site, there was more to try to keep track of!

I decided that it would be simplest to create one **Courageous Living Guide** that brought in the best content from each of the four Guides. It's *not* an exact replica of those four Guides (that would be more than 600 pages of content!) but it **brings my favorite lessons from each into one, cohesive place.**

# Let's get digital.

The program works like this:

**You've got this e-program, which consists of an e-book component and video seminars and interviews.**

**Each day, sit down and read one lesson.** If there's a video or an interview that goes with that lesson, watch the video.

**To watch the videos,** click the link within each chapter. A browser window should open. Enter the password when prompted to do so, click "submit" and you'll be transferred to the page with the video you're looking for.

There are video seminars created by me that expand the content in the chapter, and there are also audio and video interviews on topics related to that particular module.

You take this day by day, one day at a time.

If you want some help staying accountable, sign up for the accountability email list that is FREE as part of your purchase.

You enter your email information and you'll receive emails that have been scheduled to go out at random, reminding you of your commitment to finishing the program.

No sales fodder, just support.

*((Note: No video access is provided as part of this free download)).*

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*Disclaimer: This e-program and its contents are not intended to be used as a substitute for psychotherapy or work with a mental health professional.*

# Module One:

# **Courageous Beginnings**

**When you're practicing courage, where do you start?**

You start by intimately knowing that which you're already working with--and using it as your gold.

Here we go.

You don't have to wait to live your vision. You can decide what your life vision is, what gets you fired up, what you know you could "get behind," and then start practicing living that (with gentleness for the times when you aren't practicing it perfectly).

This is a choice. The second you recognize that, you're taking full ownership of your life.

# Lesson One: You get **what you give.**

This is how it is, you know? You get what you give. I say this lovingly. I say this as someone who has started something new with all of the best intentions, and seen what happens when I didn't have a plan. The most discouraging times were those when I didn't want to take responsibility for my experience.

**You are encouraged to make your first priority this and this only:** Determine how you'll go about wrestling down this wiggly, wily octopus of change that is before you. Take a realistic look at your schedule and decide whether you'd like to bop in three times a week, once a week, every day...it's totally up to you.

## **Suggested commitment:**

Make checking in with this Guide the thing that you do before you check your email each day.

Twenty minutes--start the day by checking in with you.

That's it. Keep it simple.

## **Also:**

**Believe** in the power of five minutes. If you don't have twenty minutes, take five. Five minutes of sinking into something can work wonders. Be willing right now to cut past the drama of, "But I only have five minutes." Instead, choose to make whatever time you have available to you, enough.

**Consider** printing this out and putting it in a binder. I'm all about saving trees, but something tells me I'll never fully go digital when it comes to books--I want the feeling of holding them in my hand, dog-eared pages, and underlining things that are important to me. Make this something that you can sit with on the couch while sipping tea and wrapped in your favorite blanket, or that you can take with you and review while you wait for your kid to get out of ballet class, or if an appointment runs late. Put it next to your bed, and read one thing before you go to bed at night.

**Use** accountability measures. This can mean blogging about your process, finding an accountability partner, starting a group, working with a [life coach](#), putting electronic ringing bells into your calendar.

**Take** what you need, leave the rest. You are your own best guide.

**Trust** that the intention behind everything presented here, no matter how confrontational it may seem, is intended in kindness and pushing you to live big.

**Trust** that you can do this.

## Planning in **Time**

Use the following calendar to plan in when you'd like to make space in your life, twenty minutes a day (more if you wish!) to check in with this e-program. I suggest taking it just one or two lessons at a time.

Monday:
Tuesday:
Wednesday:
Thursday:
Friday:
Saturday:
Sunday:

*“My back-up plan in case my kid gets sick, my boss needs me extra days at work, I get really busy, I feel resistant, etc., is”:*

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## BE your Journey.

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Video: (video has been disabled for this free download)

*“The purpose of your whole life is not to make a lot of money, it’s not to find the perfect marriage, it’s not to build Gampo Abbey [a Zen monastery]. It’s not to do any of these things. You have a certain life, and whatever life you’re in is a vehicle for waking up. If you’re an actress, that’s the vehicle for waking up. If you’re a construction worker, that’s the vehicle for waking up. If you’re a retired person facing old age, that’s the vehicle for waking up. If you’re alone and you feel lonely and you wish you had a mate, that’s the vehicle for waking up. If you have a huge family around you and wish you had a little more free time, that’s the vehicle for waking up. There’s no better situation than the one you have. It’s made for you. It’ll show you everything you need to know about where your zipper’s stuck and where you can leap.” --Pema Chodron, The Wisdom of No Escape*

**The Courageous Living Guide** is an e-program that dives into the heart of starting a journey. It’s for the person who stands on the precipice of change--whether it’s a brand-new endeavor or cleaning an old slate and shifting course--and they want the process to be heart-centered yet grounded, because they’re wise enough to understand the importance of taking the time to explore the inner landscape. This is the program for the person who knows that they’re tired of 1-2-3 plans--they’re embarking on a new approach to their job, their relationships, their creative process and their selfhood, and they need to build a foundation for the changes they’re making. That involves the two major topics of this e-program: Being, and Belief & Story.

**So, we’re not starting with a 1-2-3 plan. First, we need to start with shifting the mental space for change.** This mental shift is perhaps the defining thing that has helped me to create what I wanted in my life and to feel a sense of freedom from the blocks that inevitably crop up—blocks that otherwise might lead me to give up on myself or what I wanted.

I invite you to BE your journey—to literally embrace the idea of becoming your journey and accepting whatever steps into that space.

To BE a journey is a little different than to be “on a journey.”  
Let me explain.

You’re at an important point of change—this is the time when you want to step into a different space for your life.

I honor you of you for courageously taking the risk of trying/doing/being in a new space!

**The invitation to BE a journey is an invitation to re-route how we think of navigating change in our lives.** To change something is usually to start with the end result in mind. This can be a great thing to do if one is clear that they won't fall into the danger of attaching to "This is the way it *should* be/It *should not* be any other way than this way or it's wrong/I'm *failing* if it doesn't look the way I thought it would/This isn't how it's *supposed* to look."

However, my experience personally, and as a Coach, is that most of us walk into the desire to shift something completely caught up in attachments to a specific outcome. When we attach to that outcome, we resist anything that doesn't look as if it fits within that specific outcome that's desired—which is to say that as soon as challenges start to appear, **fear shows up** and many of us start to think that maybe we made a mistake, or it's too hard, or perhaps we aren't the right person for this particular dream.

Consider: *How often do we start out on a dream and then give up if we run into several challenges or blocks? What would it look like if we weren't attached to the end result, trusting that the challenges were part of the process? How much kinder would we be to ourselves if we were more invested in BEing our journey rather than "being on" a journey?*

**BEing a journey looks like** saying that you're ready for change and simply holding that truth, without attaching to an idea of what it 'has to' look like at the end. BEing a journey is having a commitment to walking a path, not walking a path "if and only if it looks okay to me and I get what I want." BEing a journey doesn't give up when blocks arise, because one can only give up on a task or a goal—we cannot give up on BEing.

**BEing our journey is perhaps the most courageous and beneficial step we could take in our lives.**

Perhaps you're reading this and thinking, "Wait a second. I am embarking on this because I want to change things. Now you're suggesting that I let go of any attachment to changing things? Is this some kind of reverse-psychology? What am I going to get out of this?"

**Here's what I get out of choosing to BE a journey rather than focus on an end result, every single time:**

- less tension or anxiety (*I'm stepping into a space of trusting*)
- less worry about "messaging it up" (*how can I mess it up if I'm willing to BE a journey and trust that the "messaging up" could be part of getting me to where I want to be? Every step, every piece, has value when I BE a journey.*)
- less control of others (*I don't need them act/be/say things/think a certain way*)
- what I'm hoping to cultivate in my life usually comes faster and easier
- when it doesn't come faster and easier, I realize later that the slower/harder path taught me a lot more and I'm grateful for it.
- when the thing I was hoping for didn't come, without a doubt something even better, perhaps even something I wanted more, showed up.
- FREEDOM, a glorious feeling of FREEDOM to just. be. without. the. inner. critic. crap! (*Basically, the "bad days" just don't feel as bad because I'm not attaching to them as some kind of evidence that I'm on the wrong path—instead, I'm accepting that bad days happen, they're part of BEing my journey, and that's that.*)

- Most importantly—my willingness to BE a journey has enabled me to set a goal and stay on the path. I don't give up on things; I revise. Journeys are about moving along a path, not magically transporting from one point to another in a second. Because I allow that space, I see the evidence of change showing up in my life on a regular basis.

**So, then—this is just an invitation.** Maybe this concept is already somewhat familiar to you—I know that I heard about it or read about it from a number of different spiritual paths, teachers, speakers, etc., before I developed my own way of thinking about it and then stepped into practicing it. To practice it—and to have someone available to remind me, re-remind me, and hold a mirror up to show me where my words and actions were inconsistent—is what it took for me really shift.

**You now have this opportunity. I invite you to start creating this program for yourself.** Create it by making connections with others and sharing your experience. Create it by staying more internal. Create it by deciding how much time you want to put in. Create it by getting a new, clean notebook or create it by chucking the notebook and writing on scarlet-red paper from the art store or by never writing down a thing but just carrying ideas through your day. Create it in a way that works for you, and be willing to BE a journey, to notice what works for you and what doesn't, and to revise as you go along.

If you step into BEing a journey, you can't "do it wrong."  
Whatever shows up as "wrong" is the gift of noticing where something doesn't work for you, and choosing a different path.

You're a smart cookie. You've probably already figured out that what I'm calling "BEing your journey" is what others call "acceptance."

As Cheri Huber writes in her phenomenal book [There Is Nothing Wrong With You](#):

"The reason acceptance isn't more popular is that in acceptance, there is nothing to do. In acceptance, there is nothing 'wrong' that needs to be changed, fixed, worked on or otherwise improved. And the simple, astounding, mind-bogglingly amazing fact is that as soon as you accept yourself exactly as you are, all of those 'character flaws' begin to fall away because those 'flaws' exist only in non-acceptance, in self-hate."

**Notice that Huber never says (and I'm not saying) that acceptance is devoid of action.** You can completely and totally accept your process and what it looks like and all of the delicious things that show up—the frustrations, the joys, the detours, the distractions, the goodness, the badness—you can be present to all of that. That's noticing. Acceptance as I'm thinking of it is not giving up, nor is it what the "losers" are left with.

**Acceptance is freedom** because when we are okay with reality just being reality, we suffer less. It will take you as much time to accomplish your goals as it is going to take. Period. No more time, no less time. Will you choose to accept that? Will you choose to be okay with how long it will take? There will be as many challenges along the way as there will be challenges along the way. No more challenges, no fewer challenges. Will you choose to accept that? Will you choose to be okay with challenges coming up as you're BEing your journey?

## Courageous Questions:

You're probably coming into this program with a set of expectations for what it will do for you. How open do you feel, in this moment, for the possibility that you will be doing things for you? What feelings or voices come up?

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Where in your life are you most likely to focus on a result, rather than letting something be a(n) imperfect) process?

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Have you ever had an experience in your life where something that seemed like the worst possible thing—something you were convinced you did not want—was actually, in hindsight, a great thing? (I.e., the breakup with the Wrong Person that lead you to The Right Person; the sports injury that taught you how to slow down; the layoff that lead you to a different profession)

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Where are *three* areas in your life where you can clearly see that allowing some space for imperfection (even trusting that something seemingly imperfect could actually be better off in the long run) would serve you?

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**Notice:** One of the ways that fear can crop up, especially at the beginning of something, is to disregard these exercises, to say things like, *“That’s such a small step--who really cares about that?”* or *“This doesn’t seem like a big shift to make--there must be more to it than this--this must not really work.”*

**Fear is Ego, and Ego loves drama**--which means that Ego is going to be looking around for some monumental shift to happen, or discount anything that doesn’t seem earth-shattering.

If “earth-shattering” really worked, wouldn’t you have made a change and stuck with it, by now?

**Break the pattern of “the next big thing I try will do it”** and embrace change that happens with small steps. Be aware that this might drive the Ego crazy. The Ego will sound incredibly rational as it tells you to quit what you’ve started.

I personally challenge you, right now, to finish this program in its entirety, and to resist whatever voices tell you that it can’t be of service.

I personally challenge you to that because I know that when this material was first presented to me, through various teachers and incarnations, my Ego resisted it.

I never got the gift until I stopped resisting.

In other words, I never got the gift until I faced my fear--of boredom, of “something not working,” of “wasting my time,” or “just not feeling like it” and really applied myself to something with commitment.

Then the whole world opened up.

## Another Idea: The Shift-Plan



Maybe you're someone who digs making Plans.

**I get it. I'm a Planner, myself.** Some signs that you like making Plans? A healthy personal growth collection on your bookshelf. A penchant for workshops. Owning more than one calendar or digital organizer. A love of list-making. Excitement at the prospect of wandering the aisles of office supply stores, especially when a new year of Franklin Covey and DayRunner planners have just arrived...

The only thing to watch out for when you make plans is noticing where doing so keeps you from BEing your journey--sometimes the obsessive planning is really masking a fear of sitting and being with oneself, or accepting oneself as they are.

**Use this series of questions to clarify and formulate a plan for what you'd like to see shift in the coming year.**

### Personal Growth/Fulfillment/How I feel about me

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Intimate and Romantic Relationships

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Personal Relationships/Friendships

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Career/Work in the World

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Money/Abundance

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Health

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Spirit

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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### Creativity

In one year's time, I'd like to have shifted to a place where...

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## What do I need to do?

Use this space to write down at least 3 action steps to be undertaken to see that shift happen. For example, if you wanted to shift into a place where you have more connected friendships, some steps could be: *a.) let my friends know how much I value them, b.) suggest getting together more often, c.) reach out for support when I feel alone, rather than trying to deal with it by myself.*

### Personal Growth/Fulfillment/How I feel about me

1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Intimate and Romantic Relationships

1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Personal Relationships/Friendships

1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Career/Work in the World

1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Money/Abundance

1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Health

1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Spirit

- 1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Creativity

- 1.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## How Committed Am I?



Use this space to declare the importance of what you are committing to as well as the costs of not fulfilling your commitment.

Personal Growth/Fulfillment/How I feel about me

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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### Intimate and Romantic Relationships

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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### Personal Relationships/Friendships

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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Career/Work in the World

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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Money/Abundance

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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Health

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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Spirit

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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## Creativity

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*The cost of not fulfilling my commitment in this area (financial costs, health costs, emotional costs, costs to relationships, costs to career, etc.)*

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Quick check-in:  
Are you being gentle with  
yourself along the way?

# Get more.

If you'd like to get the full Courageous Living Guide, click or type the following link into your browser:

<http://www.yourcourageouslife.com/courageous-living-guides/>

Interested in starting **Life Coaching**? I work one-on-one with highly motivated women who want to use the practice of courage to live remarkable lives. I pride myself on being intuitive yet pragmatic, and less focused on “technique” with a client--instead, I'm interested in meeting you where you're at, and sounding the call for you to rise.

Head here to learn more:

<http://www.yourcourageouslife.com/life-coaching>

Are you already a **life coach**? I help other life coaches develop their practices. I think life coaching is important, relevant, and effective--and that a lot of really wonderful coaches aren't reaching the people they want to reach.

You can check out **THE COACHING BLUEPRINT**, here:

<http://www.yourcourageousBLUEPRINT.com>

or

You can learn about Blueprint Sessions, here: <http://www.yourcourageouslife.com/blueprint-sessions>