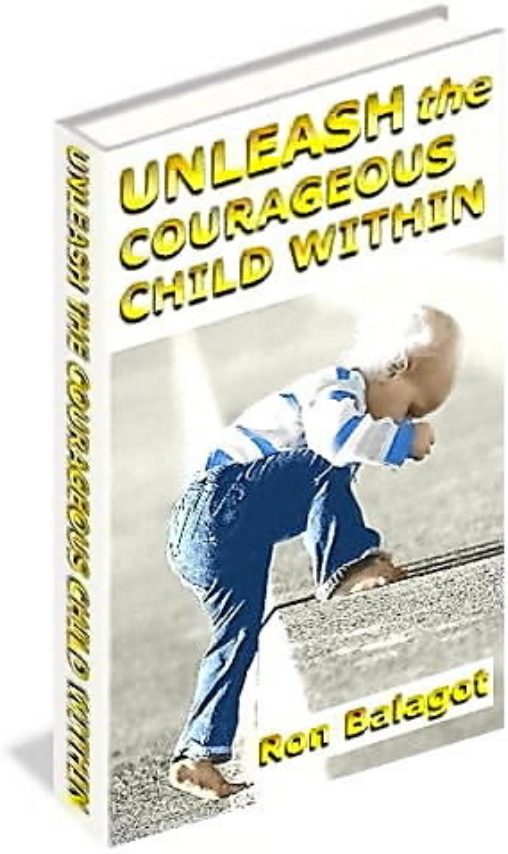
UNLEASH the Courageous Child Within

By Ron Balagot



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A Quick Note

To fully benefit from this ebook, it's best to read every chapter. In other words, please don't be tempted to skip any chapters…because each one is there for a reason (and you'll understand what I mean when you've read to the very end).

Also, to make things simpler for everyone, I used the pronoun "he" throughout the ebook in places where I would normally use "he/she." (No offense to my female readers.)

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About The Author

Ron Balagot (a.k.a. Gabriel Daniels) is the author of the life-changing ebooks, *Confidence & Courage Tips…To Help You Realize Your Dreams* and *Public Speaking Fear Conquered: Your Fearless Presenter Within UNLEASHED!* (both endorsed by authors/speakers).

He is also the publisher/editor/writer of the *Achieve Your Dreams* Newsletter. A free online newsletter dedicated to inspiring and empowering people towards their dreams.

Since early 2005, his written works have already reached and helped countless people all over the globe.

And at this point in his life, one of his main goals is to share what he's learned throughout the years with as many people as possible (aiming for several million lives worldwide) so they, too, will be empowered with the tools/strategies to go for their dreams.

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Introduction

Congratulations!

You've made a wise decision by downloading this ebook.

In the following pages, you'll discover powerful principles and strategies that can help change your life in ways you may have never imagined.

If you'll *wholeheartedly* apply what you read in this ebook, you'll have the ability to go for what you want in life…to reach for your dreams…to attain success (whatever your definition of success is).

In fact, applying only one or a few of the strategies presented here can dramatically impact your life in positive ways…and in a short period of time (a much shorter period of time than if you were not exposed to the strategies at all).

Furthermore, it will give you the strength…the ability…to overcome what may seem like insurmountable odds (yes, even when the whole world seems to be against you). (The truth is, others tried to discourage me from pursuing my writing goals. One person even said something like: *"Stop dreaming. Give it up. You've got a one in a million chance of reaching your dream."* Had I listened to them, I wouldn't have the privilege today of impacting many people's lives worldwide with my written works.)

Of course, the best part of all is, it will help give your life more meaning (a deeper sense of fulfillment). How? Well, it will allow you to contribute to others (to those you care about…and even to total strangers) in positive ways (as a result of your new, positive outlook).

Now, before we move on, please take a moment to ponder on the following:

What would it mean to you to have more courage? To have the ability to conquer fears?

- Would you experiment with your ideas more? Would you boldly

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ask for the help you need in order to pursue your ideas?

- Would you be more expressive in many ways? Would you speak your mind more?
- Would you pursue the career you've always wanted?
- Would you stand up for your deepest convictions when needed?
- Would you do all kinds of daring or challenging things…things you've always wanted to do but avoided to do because of fear?

Imagine all the things you would do if you only had access to more courage…to "overflowing" courage. (I mean, let's face it, the best ideas…the most exciting dreams…will never materialize if you don't have the courage to pursue them. That's how crucial courage is.)

Imagine how different your life would be.

And as you visualize the possibilities, pay attention to what you feel inside.

Does it make you feel happy as you imagine what you could do…or what you could achieve/accomplish? Does it make you excited? Even ecstatic?

> All our dreams
> can come true,
> if we have the courage
> to pursue them.
>
> ~ *Walt Disney* ~

Well, all I can say is this…by the time you finish reading this ebook, those positive feelings will be reinforced. You'll feel more empowered. You'll have a stronger sense of conviction that what you've imagined is attainable.

In fact, **I'm convinced that you'll never look at life the same way again**.

Now, having said that, let's begin our journey…

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Chapter 1

An Experience That Changed My Life
(And How It Can Change Yours)

Please allow me to share with you an article I wrote a while back. It's about something inspiring that happened many years ago.

Although it's been a while since it happened, it's still very clear in my mind. In fact, every time I think about it, it moves me deeply…in a way that's hard to describe.

(This particular article I'm talking about, by the way, has been published by the Fortune 500 company, *Colgate-Palmolive,* and many other websites. It has even been reprinted in different languages.)

And so, without further ado, here's the article…

Run Freely
(A Lesson About Courage)

By Ron Balagot

One afternoon, many years ago, I went to pick up my mother from work. I got there a little early so I parked the car by the curb, across the street from where she worked, and waited for her.

As I looked outside the car window to my right, there was a small park where I saw a little boy, around one and a half to two years old, running freely on the grass as his mother watched from a short distance. The boy had a big smile on his face as if he had just been set free from some sort of prison. The boy would then fall to the grass, get up, and without hesitation or without looking back at his mother, run as fast as he could, again, still with a smile on his face, as if nothing had happened.

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At that moment, I thought to myself, *"Why aren't most adults this way?"* Most adults, when they fall down (figuratively speaking), make a big deal out of it and don't even make a second attempt. They would be so embarrassed that someone saw them fall that they would not try again. Or, because they fell, they would justify to themselves that they're just not cut out for it. They would end up too afraid to attempt again for fear of failure.

However, with kids (especially at an early age), when they fall down, they don't perceive their falling down as failure, but instead, they treat it as a learning experience (as just another result/outcome). They feel compelled to try and try again until they succeed. (The answer must be…they have not associated "falling down" with the word "failure" yet. Thus, they don't know how to feel the state which accompanies failure. As a result, they are not disempowered in any way. Plus, they probably think to themselves that it's perfectly okay to fall down…that it's not wrong to do so. In other words, they give themselves permission to make mistakes, subconsciously. Thus, they remain empowered.)

While I was touched by the boy's persistence, I was equally touched by the manner in which he ran. With each attempt, he looked so confident…so natural. No signs of fear, nervousness, or of being discouraged—as if he didn't give a care about the world around him. His only aim was to run freely and to do it as effectively as he could. He was just being a child—just being himself—being completely in the moment. He was not looking for approval or was not worrying about whether someone was watching or not. He wasn't concerned about being judged. He didn't seem to be bothered by the fact that maybe someone would see him fall (as there were others in the park aside from him and his mother) and that it would be embarrassing if he did fall. No, all that mattered to him was to accomplish the task or activity at hand to the best of his ability. To run…and to feel the experience of running fully and freely.

I learned a lot from that observation and experience, and have successfully brought that lesson with me in my many pursuits in life.

Since then, I've always believed that in each of us is a little child with absolute courage. A child that has the ability to run freely (or express

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himself fully and freely)—without a care for anything external—without a care for what people would say if he/she experiences a fall.

I believe that that courageous part of us, that courageous child within us all, will always be with us for as long as we live. We only need to allow it to emerge more fully. **We only need to once again connect with that child within us…and give that child permission to run freely, just like that boy in the park.**

The lesson I learned from that observation is what I would like to bring across in this ebook.

And that is…

COURAGE IS ALREADY WITHIN US ALL.

We only need to unleash it.

We only need to once again tap into that part of ourselves that knows how to conquer all sorts of fears.

Unleashing the courageous child within us will allow us to take action towards our dreams. Allow us to get what we want out of life.

In fact, I agree with what Walt Disney said when he said:

Too many people grow up.
That's the real trouble with the world,
too many people grow up.
They forget.

(Especially the last part when he said, *"They forget."*)

Although he was probably talking about a child's sense of wonder (or a child's imagination) when he said that, the truth is, it can easily apply to all our good childhood qualities…and one of those qualities is "courage."

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In this ebook, my goal is not only to remind you of what you already know deep down inside…**that there's a courageous child within you…but to help you set that courageous child free, once again.**

> So, like a forgotten fire, a childhood can always flare up again within us.
>
> ~ *Gaston Bachelard* ~

But before we go to that section where I show you exactly how to do that, it's very important that we first learn about…

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Chapter 2

The Power Of Modeling
(Duplicating Excellence)

A prudent person profits from personal experience,
a wise one from the experience of others.

~ Joseph Collins ~

Years ago, I learned a very powerful strategy called "modeling."

Up until that point, I had actually been using the strategy "unconsciously." But when I learned about it and its great benefits, I "consciously" used it more.

As a result, I've been able to achieve goals more easily…and much more quickly. Not only that, I've been able to achieve more goals in less time.

I can't stress enough how powerful this strategy is. It's something you'll want to consider adding to your arsenal if you want to achieve more in less time…if you want to achieve your dreams much sooner. (We're talking about saving months, if not years, of time and effort. What it took others to achieve, you'll be able to do in much less time…in half, or less than half, the time. Seriously.)

I mean, why take the long road to your intended destination (or your desired results) when there's a shortcut to the same destination?

So, what exactly is modeling?

Well, I first read about the concept in Anthony Robbins' national best-selling book, *Unlimited Power* (actually, Anthony got the concept from the science of *NLP* or *Neuro Linguistic Programming*). (By the way, in case you haven't heard of Anthony Robbins, who's also known as Tony Robins, he's one of the world's leading experts in the area of personal achievement.)

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Basically, it's the process of duplicating (or reproducing) any form of human excellence.

It is based on the idea that if someone duplicates the beliefs, mental processes, physiology, etc. of another person who's successful in a certain area…or who's successful in achieving a specific result in a certain area…the person doing the duplicating (modeling) will end up with similar results (or very close to similar results).

In other words, anything anyone can do, you should be able to do also …as long as you run your nervous system in the exact same way (since everyone shares the same neurology).

> Is there anyone so wise as to learn by the experience of others?
>
> ~ *Voltaire* ~

For the sake of our study, I'm not going to go into too much detail with regard to modeling. I feel it's enough that you know the fundamentals (later on, though, we'll go more deeply into one of the most important things you need to model…a person's belief system).

(If you'd like to get more deeply into the subject of modeling, I highly recommend getting a copy of Tony's book, *Unlimited Power.* There are excellent chapters in it related to modeling.)

So, basically, if you want to achieve a specific result, all you have to do is model someone who's already succeeded in achieving that result.

You need to find out what actions that person took specifically…how he used his mind and body to produce the result you desire.

The truth is, all of us are already modeling to a certain degree (we've actually been doing it since we were kids)…it's not something entirely new. The only problem is, we've been doing it "unconsciously"…and not exactly to the degree where it could potentially produce outstanding results.

The key is to do it "consciously." And to do it more "proactively."

So, the next time you come up with an idea, or a result you'd like to

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produce, simply ask yourself: *"Who's already successful in producing this result?"* And then go and do whatever it takes to find out how that person does it (mentally, physiologically, etc.).

Again, I know this stuff works because I use this strategy for nearly everything I do…and have gotten tremendous results (yes, to the point where I've been able to master certain skills in weeks…sometimes even days or hours). In fact, I wish I started doing it more proactively much sooner.

You see, if there's something that really matters to me, I'll take the time to do some research to find out how others have dealt with the same situation…how others have successfully achieved the results I'm after. (In other words, I'd rather take the time in the beginning to learn from other people's mistakes than to endlessly and unnecessarily go through trial and error…to waste so much time and energy in the long run.)

> In many cases,
> a person may have
> spent years of trial and
> error to find the
> specific way to use his
> body or mind
> to produce a result.
> But you can step in,
> model the actions
> that took years
> to perfect,
> and produce similar
> results in a matter
> of moments, months—
> or at least in a lot less
> time than it took the
> person whose results
> you desire
> to duplicate.
>
> *~ Anthony Robbins ~*

I mean, think about it. If you needed to get to a certain place, and you looked at a map, and you saw that there were several ways to get there…which route would you take? Would you take the longest route? Or the shortest one? Of course, you'd take the shortest route. It's just common sense.

I'm sure you wouldn't say, *"Oh, here's the longest route to get there. And since I have all the time in the world and have lots of gas in my car, I think I'll take it."* Of course not.

And if you wouldn't say that, why, then, would you treat life any differently? Why would you treat the pursuit of your goals/dreams any differently…like you had all the time in the world?

I mean, do you know exactly how long you're going to live on earth?

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Consider Marcus Aurelius' advice: *Live not one's life as though one had a thousand years, but live each day as the last.*

Besides, not only will modeling the success strategies of others help you to achieve your desired results much faster (and help you to save precious resources like time and energy)…it will also help you to avoid so much "unnecessary" pain.

> Learn all you can
> from the mistakes
> of others.
> You won't have time to
> make them all yourself.
>
> ~ *Alfred Sheinwold* ~

(Of course, it doesn't mean that you will no longer go through any hardships or obstacles along the way. Not at all…since they come with the territory. It just means that they will be lessened to a substantial degree.)

I can't stress enough that the ability to model the success strategies of others is one of the most important skills you'll want to develop…you'll want to master.

And the earlier you start, the better.

Modeling the success strategies of others will save you weeks, months, or years of effort (and save you from experiencing so much unnecessary pain/discomfort). It will save you lots of time…time you could be using to pursue other goals that are important to you. (In other words, you'll be able to achieve more of your goals in less time.)

It will help propel you towards your dreams.

Seriously, would you rather achieve your dreams in 10 years?

Or in 5 or less?

Would you rather achieve 1 goal in 5 years?

Or 5 (or more) goals in 5 years?

I'm sure you get my point.

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Now, why am I drilling this concept into you? What does this have to do with courage…or accessing one's courage?

In the next few chapters, things will become clearer to you.

But for now, please bear with me.

> If you want
> to be successful,
> find someone who has
> achieved the results
> you want and copy
> what they do
> and you'll achieve
> the same results.
>
> ~ *Anthony Robbins* ~

Just know that the strategy of "modeling" is vital to your success. It will make all the difference when it comes to your rate of progress towards the achievement of your goals (or desired results).

Now, let's go to something else you need to be aware of, and must make full use of, if you want to succeed in life…

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Chapter 3

The Power Of Belief

Men often become what they believe themselves to be.
If I believe I cannot do something,
it makes me incapable of doing it.
But when I believe I can,
then I acquire the ability to do it even if
I didn't have it in the beginning.

~ Mahatma Gandhi ~

Belief is a very powerful force.

So powerful that it practically runs your life.

It works behind the scenes, guiding the decisions you make and the actions you take. (It determines what you will and will not do…and "how" you'll do certain things.)

That's why it is up to you (yes, you can make a "conscious" choice) to make sure that the beliefs you hold empower you…and not limit you…towards your journey to success.

And you can do it by first "becoming more aware" of your deeply held beliefs.

The truth is, you may not even know it but the reason you may not be reaching some of your goals is because of some underlying, negative or limiting belief you hold.

So, what exactly is a belief?

Basically, a belief is an acceptance of (or conviction about) something being true or real. (I also like to think of it as a state/feeling that something is true.)

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A good example of the power of belief is the story about a man named Roger Bannister.

You see, for thousands of years, people believed that no human being could run a 4 minute mile. It just seemed physically impossible.

But Roger Bannister believed differently.

> The mind is the limit.
> As long as the mind
> can envision the fact
> that you can do something,
> you can do it,
> as long as you really believe
> 100 percent.
>
> *~ Arnold Schwarzenegger ~*
>
> Believe it can be done.
> When you believe
> something can be done,
> really believe, your mind will
> find the ways to do it.
> Believing in a solution
> paves the way to the solution.
>
> *~ David J. Schwartz ~*

He believed he could do it. And because he believed with every fiber of his being that he could do it, his mental and physical resources followed to support his belief.

Then finally, one day, he did what people thought was impossible. He ran a 3:59 mile.

And what's interesting is, shortly after he shattered the limiting belief that it couldn't be done, many others went on to achieve similar results.

(Basically, when you believe you can do something, your mind will provide you with all the reasons why you can. And if you believe you can't do something, the mind will also give you all the reasons why you can't.)

Now, another interesting (and shocking) thing I learned about the power of belief is what's said about studies done by Dr. Bernie Siegel (a Yale Professor and best-selling author who has done research on people with Multiple Personality Disorders). He actually witnessed patients' eye color literally change from one color to another as the patients' personality changed. In addition, physical marks would appear and reappear depending on which personality was being manifested. And in some cases, diseases such as diabetes or high blood pressure would come and go…again, depending on which personality was being manifested.

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In other words, a person's belief can significantly affect his biochemistry. (This also goes to show how powerful the human mind is…having the ability to adopt a new identity in a split second.)

(And, of course, there are many more examples of the power of belief, such as the placebo effect, the Pygmalion effect, and others.)

Now, another thing I discovered is this: Your beliefs have a lot of influence over the physiological states you're in. (In other words, how you feel in certain situations is very much influenced by your underlying beliefs about yourself, your abilities, or the situation at hand. And remember, how you feel…or the state you're in…affects how you perform certain tasks…which eventually affects the results you get.)

> Within you right now
> is the power to do things
> you never dreamed possible.
> This power becomes available
> to you just as soon as
> you can change your beliefs.
>
> *~ Dr. Maxwell Maltz ~*

Think about this for a moment.

Let's say you (an average person with no superhuman strength or martial arts skills) were walking in a dimly lit area of the city in the middle of the night. And there's no one in sight except for a tall, dark figure walking towards you (and with a long object in his hand). How would you feel? What would your immediate reaction be?

Wouldn't you most likely go into a state of fear (or what is also called the *fight-or-flight response*)…or even panic, thinking (or believing) it's someone planning to attack you with a weapon?

But what if, let's say, you were told by a friend ahead of time that he would meet with you in that specific area, at that specific time, and he'd be bringing along his favorite baseball bat so he could show it off to you, how do you think your state would be then?

Of course, you'd be calm. And it's because of "your belief" that the dark figure coming towards you is a friend (with a baseball bat that he's very proud of)…someone who poses no threat to you.

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So, as you can see, beliefs are so powerful in that they affect your states.

> Belief delivers a direct command to your nervous system. When you believe something is true, you literally go into the state of its being true.
>
> ~ *Anthony Robbins* ~

Now, you've probably heard the term "visualization" (sometimes called "imagery"). (If you haven't, it's merely the act of vividly imagining a future goal or desired outcome.) Well, did you know that it helps to "reinforce the belief" that a future goal has already been realized?

It's true. It helps create a strong belief in something that has yet to happen. (Aside from Roger Bannister, Andre Agassi, the great tennis player, is an excellent example of using the power of belief to help achieve a future goal. Andre is said to have won the Wimbledon tennis tournament thousands of times by the age of ten…**in his mind**.)

Believe it or not, peak performers of all kinds (ex. world-class athletes, professional speakers, and so on) have been using visualization for years…and it has helped them tremendously both in their actual performances and in the results they end up with.

I, too, have found visualization highly beneficial. The truth is, it has helped immensely in the achievement of my goals.

Visualizing something on a regular basis (especially with strong, positive feelings and involving as many of the senses as possible) helps greatly in the attainment of a goal…because it reinforces in the nervous system the "belief" that that particular goal is "already achieved."

(And the best way to visualize is by seeing things from within your own body, looking out at your surroundings…and not watching yourself from a distance like you would be watching an actor/character on a movie screen.)

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Basically, reinforcing the belief that a certain goal is already achieved (by means of visualization) tells your subconscious mind to do whatever it takes to remain consistent with that belief. (Plus, one of the great benefits of regularly visualizing your goals is that it helps to keep you focused on them. It helps to keep you on course…since it tells your subconscious mind that what you are visualizing is very important to you…is what you strongly desire…or is what you want to move towards.)

~~~~~~

The Chinese pianist Liu Chi Kung was imprisoned for
seven years during the Cultural Revolution,
during which time he had no access to a piano.
When he returned to giving concerts again
after he was released, his playing was better than ever.
Asked how this was possible since he had not practiced
for seven years, he replied: "I did practice, every day.
I rehearsed every piece I had ever played,
note by note, in my mind."

~ Bernie Zilbergeld ~

~~~~~~

(By the way, if you haven't watched the movie, *Rudy*, starring Sean Astin, I strongly suggest you go out and get the DVD…or even just rent it. It's a very inspiring film based on a true story. And it's an excellent example of the power of belief. Trust me, this movie will deeply move you and inspire you towards your dreams.)

So, where do beliefs come from in the first place?

Well, some beliefs are from shared experiences (which eventually become universally accepted facts) like "gravity causes all objects to fall to the ground."

Many are formed during childhood (and eventually, throughout life) by observing and modeling others…while some are formed through past experiences. They are also picked up from parents, friends, society, etc.

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Now, it's very important to understand that no matter how long you've held a belief, you're not stuck with them forever. **You can change them by deciding. By making a conscious choice.**

In fact, changing your limiting beliefs into empowering ones will make all the difference in the world.

And not only is it important that you're made aware of your ability to change limiting (or disempowering) beliefs to empowering ones, it's also important for you to know that you can change beliefs in a short period of time (shorter than what you may have thought possible).

In other words, it doesn't have to take a lifetime or years (or even months or weeks) for you to change beliefs. You can change them in a matter of hours (even minutes) if you really want to.

Sometimes, even seconds (or instantly).

> We won't even attempt to achieve what we do not believe at a deep level we can have or deserve.
>
> *~ Ruth Ross ~*

(Just one example that a belief can be changed instantly is when a child touches a hot iron for the first time. He goes from a belief that "it's safe to touch this object" to the belief that "this object is hot and it hurt my hand…therefore it's not safe to touch it again in the future." Actually, the very belief that "it takes a long time to change a belief" can affect your progress…or the rate at which you change your beliefs.)

One of the fastest ways to change a limiting belief (which usually starts with the words, "I can't" or "I am not able to" or "I am not" as in "I am not strong enough"…or "I am…" as in "I am stupid"…or "I don't expect to" as in "I don't expect to win"…but can also be phrased differently like: "Skydiving is scary") is to do something (or have an experience) that disproves it.

For example, let's say you were afraid of going skydiving because you had a belief that "skydiving is scary." (You may have gotten that belief from someone who told you it was scary…or you read something that

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said it was scary…or you may have watched a certain show on television showing the frightened look on people's faces as they were about to jump off a plane. Or all of those things.)

(All those sources I mentioned, by the way, are what Tony Robbins calls *references* or *reference experiences* that support a belief. You can think of references as legs that support a tabletop…so the more legs or references, the more solid the tabletop becomes…the more solid the belief becomes.)

But you suddenly introduce doubt by saying to yourself: *"What if this belief about skydiving being scary is actually false? What if it's actually fun? What if those people who tried it and experienced fear had the wrong mindset to start off with?"* And then you decide to go skydiving to find out.

So, you get on that plane, you wear your skydiving gear, and finally, you jump.

And then you discover that it's not so bad after all. You actually enjoy it. In fact, you even make a promise to yourself that you'll encourage others to do it, too.

To believe a thing
is impossible
is to make it so.

~ French Proverb ~

We would accomplish
many more things
if we did not think of
them as impossible.

~ Chretien Malesherbes ~

As you can see, the previous belief that "skydiving is scary" has now been replaced with the belief that "skydiving is fun." And it took only one jump to change the previous, limiting belief to a new, empowering one. (In other words, the old tabletop has collapsed, since its legs have been knocked out from under it. And a new one has been formed with new legs…new, empowering references. Of course, with every succeeding jump, every positive skydiving experience, more and more legs or references are added to the tabletop, making the new belief more and more solid.)

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Another highly effective way to replace a limiting belief is by coming up with all the reasons why you must replace it. List down what it will cost you if you don't…and what it's already costing you.

In other words, you must question your limiting belief to the point where it no longer has any power over your life.

You must ask yourself questions like:

1) How has this belief negatively affected my life so far? How much pain has this belief already caused me (and those I care about)?

2) Why is this belief completely absurd?

3) Why doesn't it make any sense to have this belief anymore? Why would it be absolutely foolish to continue to have this belief?

4) Why should I get rid of this limiting belief? And why should I do it as soon as possible? In other words, what would it cost me in the future if I don't change it now?

(The goal is to associate so much pain to the limiting belief that you'll do whatever it takes to discard it from your life.)

> You can change your beliefs
> so they empower your
> dreams and desires.
> Create a strong belief
> in yourself
> and what you want.
>
> *~ Marcia Wieder ~*

And once you've weakened that particular limiting belief, go on and create a new, empowering belief to replace it. (And reinforce that empowering belief until it's solid.)

Now, will empowering beliefs "always" get you what you want?

Well, you may be disappointed to hear this, but the answer is no. In fact, I'd be lying if I said yes.

Please understand that although it's my goal to help inspire and empower you towards success, it's only right that you know "the truth" (or facts) early on.

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And the truth is, the realization of your beliefs (about your future goals) still depends on what God eventually decides…whether He will or will not give you what you believe you'll get (and He alone knows the reasons for His decision).

(In fact, there are many stories of people who strongly believed they would become someone, or they would achieve something, or they would live up to a certain age, but it never happened. Again, it's because this *solid fact*…this *absolute truth*…remains: God has the last decision. It is He who gives or withholds victory/success.)

(Mahatma Gandhi understood this solid fact I'm talking about. If you'll notice his quote at the beginning of this chapter, he hinted on this. He said: *Men often become what they believe themselves to be.* He didn't say: *Men always become what they believe themselves to be.*)

And, of course, there are instances where no matter what you believe, it simply won't happen (at least, not in this physical world we live in).

> The height of your accomplishments will equal the depth of your convictions.
>
> ~ *William F. Scolavino* ~

I mean, no matter how much you believe you can "literally fly" like a bird, it simply won't happen unless you have some special gift or you've figured out some way to defy gravity (airplanes, anti-gravity rooms, and the like don't count, of course). Or you've somehow grown giant wings on your back (which is highly unlikely).

And no matter how much effort you put into believing that the earth is square will not change the fact that it's round. (Just like what Al Kersha said: *No matter what you believe, it doesn't change the facts*.)

Now, am I saying that you shouldn't even attempt to dream the impossible?

No, not at all.

Why do you think I gave you Roger Bannister's example?

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I did it not only to show you how powerful beliefs are…but to also encourage you to **dream big**. To pursue even those things people say are impossible. (Remember, many of life's achievements were once thought by others as impossible.)

In fact, go all out. Do what makes your heart sing. Tap into your full potential. Share all your God-given gifts with others.

And do all these things with the understanding that outcomes/results are in God's hands. It is He who gives victory/success.

> Our talents are the gift that God gives to us... What we make of our talents is our gift back to God.
>
> *~ Leo Buscaglia ~*

Now, before I end this chapter, I just want to suggest something that will help immensely in your path towards success (and it will complement what you're about to read in the next chapter).

And that is:

Reinforce in yourself the belief that what you've done once (only once), you can do again (and even better).

In other words, if you've been successful at doing something once (whether it be performing a certain task/feat…or performing it while in a certain state), you can duplicate it and even improve on it. (Understand that anything you've ever done is recorded in your nervous system.)

I can't stress enough how powerful having this belief is (and you'll understand what I mean in the next chapter).

Now, as you've noticed, I spent a lot of time on this chapter (just like the previous chapter on *Modeling*)…and for good reason.

It's absolutely crucial that you know how powerful beliefs are and how big a role they play in your success…in your dream's attainment. (Basically, empowering beliefs *dramatically increase your chances* of getting what you want in life.)

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> In order to succeed, we first must believe we can.
>
> ~ *Michael Korda* ~

Also, that you know **it's in your power to change beliefs that are not serving you…to choose which beliefs you'll keep (and reinforce) and which ones you'll discard (and replace).**

Now, with that in mind, let's go on to the final and most exciting chapter…

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Chapter 4

The Best Models Of Courage

The child-soul is an ever-bubbling fountain
in the world of humanity.

~ Friedrich Froebel ~

Experts say that we are born with only two fears…*the fear of loud noises* and *the fear of falling* (and these fears serve as built-in survival mechanisms).

If that is the case, then it only means that not only are nearly all fears *learned*, but that we were practically "fearless" at one point in our lives. We were filled with "overflowing" courage.

Now, knowing that, it's important for us to determine what was different in our childhood (what beliefs, qualities, or thinking patterns we had) *so we can once again tap into that fearless/courageous part of ourselves.*

We need to find out what kinds of beliefs (or mental patterns) children have (or we once had) so that we can model them…adopt them…and reap the many rewards as a result.

> Fears are educated
> into us, and can,
> if we wish,
> be educated out.
>
> *~ Karl A. Menninger~*

(Now, you can understand why it was so important to first go through the preceding chapters on *Modeling* and *Belief.* In fact, if you'll remember my suggestion just before the end of the last chapter on *Belief,* the reason I made that suggestion is so that you'll be effective in modeling "your own past successes as a child." In other words, if there's anything you were successful in doing when you were a child…for example, doing things fearlessly or in a relaxed manner…you can do it again. I mean, *you're still the same person…with the same nervous system*…so there's no logical reason why you can't.)

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Again, it's important to understand that children, especially at a very early age (around 1-2 years old…or the years before they learned many types of fears), possess beliefs that are somehow different than what adults have. In fact, they think and perceive things differently.

And this is the reason why, *as kids, we were more calm and courageous in many situations.*

Now, there are a couple of ways to determine what those beliefs (or mental patterns) are.

We can either look back at our own childhood…or simply observe children (by doing our best to look into their minds). (*Note:* We can either observe them in real life or through television shows like *America's Funniest Home Videos,* where they are simply being themselves.)

> We don't make films primarily for children. We try to make them for the child in all of us.
>
> ~ *Walt Disney* ~
>
> Adults are only kids grown up…
>
> ~ *Walt Disney* ~
>
> A grownup is a child with layers on.
>
> ~ *Woody Harrelson* ~

Now, what I'm about to present to you are what I believe to be the beliefs (or mental patterns) children have that make them differ from many adults (and I'm talking about adults who've "forgotten" that they once had these beliefs…adults who no longer adopt these beliefs in their lives).

When you model or adopt these beliefs (or mental patterns), you will once again be empowered to do things calmly and courageously…just like you did many times when you were a kid. (And, because you'll hesitate less…and take action more…you'll accomplish/achieve more in less time.)

I can promise you, by "wholeheartedly" adopting these beliefs…*you will have access to power you've always had…but have forgotten to use.*

Your life will dramatically transform. In fact, there's just no way that it won't.

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Now, all I ask of you is to keep an open mind…to withhold any judgment…so you can fully benefit from the information you're about to read. (If you'll keep an open mind, you'll find that not only does the information make so much sense, but that *it's something you already know at a deep level.* In other words, it bears "the ring of truth.")

By the way, you may be wondering how I came up with the information I'm about to share with you. Well, as I mentioned earlier, there are two ways to find out what children's beliefs are…either by closely examining your own childhood or by closely observing children. I did both.

First, I looked at my own childhood, going back to a time (especially all those times when I did things fearlessly…with an absolute calm). I either watched myself from a distance in my mind's eye…or I put myself back into my actual body as a child…seeing the world from the eyes of my childhood self.

And while I visualized my past, I asked questions like: *"What were my beliefs back then that I was able to do things calmly…courageously? What was going through my mind in those instances when I did things calmly and courageously? How did I perceive things that I was able to do so many daring things?"* (And I continued to ask similar questions in order to get specific answers.)

In every real man
a child is hidden
that wants to play.

~ Friedrich Nietzsche ~

A child who does not
play is not a child,
but the man who
doesn't play has lost
forever the child
who lived in him
and who he
will miss terribly.

~ Pablo Neruda ~

When I grow up
I want to be a little boy.

~ Joseph Heller ~

I also asked the same thing of children I closely observed (my own kids included). I asked questions like: *"What kind of belief or thinking would this child have to have in order to perform certain tasks in an empowering state? What belief would trigger this kind of calm and courageous state? What could possibly be going through this child's mind as he tackles certain challenges? What is this child seeing and hearing in his head as he*

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does daring things?" (And so on.)

All in all, I'm very confident with the accuracy of what I've discovered.

Now, before we actually go to the list of beliefs I'll be going over, I'd like to ask you to please keep in mind that although many of the beliefs I mention apply to very young children (around 1-2 years old…or around the time before they learned to speak), it's very possible that they could also apply to kids that are much older. (And this is because these older kids *have successfully brought those earlier beliefs and qualities into their later years…in fact, even into adulthood.* They did not allow society or their environment to make them lose touch with that courageous part of themselves.)

> Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play.
>
> *~ Heraclitus ~*
>
> Happy is he who still loves something he loved in the nursery: He has not been broken in two by time; he is not two men, but one, and he has saved not only his soul but his life.
>
> *~ G.K. Chesterton ~*

(The truth is, the courageous men and women we admire and treat as role models are merely people who have successfully brought most, or all, of their childhood beliefs/qualities into adulthood. So, if we want to model courageous people, doesn't it make more sense to model *the very source itself…the courageous child in those adults?*)

Here, then, are what I believe to be a child's empowering beliefs:

1. It's okay to be my natural self in front of others…and not be ashamed of it. To express myself fully and freely. (I only need to express myself and not be concerned about what others will say.)

Kids haven't yet learned that they need to prove themselves to others…or that they need to impress others…or that they need to put up

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a façade/front to gain the approval of others. They simply express who they naturally are.

And because their actions are one (or congruent) with who they are at the very core, they are at their most powerful.

2. It's okay to be different.

Kids haven't yet learned about needing to conform to others…to society…to what the majority believes or expects. Plus, the concept of "competition" (or "comparison") does not yet come to mind.

In other words, they don't normally think to themselves: *"He's taller than me, therefore, he's smarter…he's better."* To them, everyone's fine just as they are. (To tell you the truth, I'm only 5'1"…and kids used to tease me a lot in school. I remember being called "shrimp" many times. But I never used my height as an excuse not to dream big…or not to take action towards my dreams. Fortunately, I was able to take the belief "it's okay to be different" all the way into my adult life.)

You see, the reason many adults fear doing something is because they feel they need to conform to what others expect of them. Plus, knowing (at a subconscious level) that others usually like or accept those who are like themselves…they feel a strong internal pressure to conform so that they'll be liked or accepted by others.

As a result of this strong need to please others (to gain their approval), they end up hesitating to do what they really want to do…or they do something other than what they really want to do (what's expected of them).

3. It's normal to perform a task with my whole being…to give my all when performing a task.

They haven't been taught otherwise. They haven't been taught to do things half-heartedly…or to fill their minds with unnecessary/useless thoughts while performing something. To them, it's only natural to give their all. To do things with their whole being.

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This belief/attitude is what helps greatly in achieving peak performances (being in "flow" or "being in the zone").

4. It's okay if people look/stare at me.

Self-consciousness is not yet in their vocabulary. They don't see anything wrong or unusual about being watched or stared at. They don't give any importance to it. (In fact, as they get a little older, there's a stage where they learn to enjoy, and even love, attention.)

Furthermore, when they are stared at, they don't think anything negative of it. The thought of *being judged* does not even cross their minds. They simply do what they're doing as if no one's watching.

In other words, their empowering belief "it's okay if people look/stare at me" has not yet been replaced by the limiting belief "it's harmful when people's eyes are glued on me."

(Please note that what I'm emphasizing here is "when kids are in the middle of doing/performing a task or are in the middle of an activity." I say this because "some kids," when not busy doing something and are stared at by some stranger or some unfamiliar face, and they're aware that they're being stared at, will feel uncomfortable and even cry.)

5. It's okay to make mistakes.

They haven't yet been programmed by society that mistakes are bad or undesirable…and that they should be avoided at all costs. In fact, at a very early age, I don't believe they even understand the concept of "making a mistake" since they only see events as *outcomes*.

> The great man
> is he who
> does not lose
> his child's heart.
>
> ~ *Mencius* ~

And because of this belief or attitude they hold, they simply attempt. They simply take action without so much analyzing beforehand. But more importantly, they remain in empowering states (calm and fearless) as they perform tasks.

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6. It's okay to be imperfect (or appear imperfect in the eyes of others). It's okay to be me…flaws and all.

(This is actually a variation of #5 above)

No one's told them yet that it's wrong or bad to be imperfect…or less than perfect. In fact, the word "perfect" doesn't even mean anything to them yet (especially to very young children). (The same thing goes for the words "right" and "wrong.")

Because of this, they tend to have this *"anything goes"* attitude.

With this belief/mindset, they're empowered to take action without the fear of possibly looking awkward/foolish (in fact, *awkwardness* or *foolishness* is not even in their vocabulary yet). Also, they are able to remain in resourceful states as they perform any task.

As adults, imagine how empowering it would be if you had this attitude. Imagine what it would be like if you had no need to be right all the time…or that you had no fear of being wrong. Wouldn't you tackle more challenges with less hesitation? And wouldn't you perform tasks better since you wouldn't be so self-conscious? Sure, you would.

7. It's natural to feel calm even before people of authority.

Most kids, especially the younger ones, if you put them in front of authority figures (yes, even the president of a country), will remain completely calm. They will not shrink in fear or feel intimidated. Why? Because, unlike most adults, they don't know they're supposed to be afraid. They don't perceive an authority figure as someone to be afraid of. (In fact, I don't believe they even know what an "authority figure" means. But if they did, they would probably only recognize one of their parents as such.)

So how can you use this knowledge? Well, for one thing, you need not feel anxious when dealing with people of authority. You can stay calm/relaxed. (If you've read my first ebook, *Confidence & Courage Tips…To Help You Realize Your Dreams,* then you understand that the power authority figures have over you is in your mind. It's all in the

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way you perceive them. It is "your perception" of their power that affects your state…thus your behavior.)

8. It's okay to be rejected (or not be approved of…or not be liked).

I think kids at a very early age are only concerned about their parents' approval and love (if at all)…and not yet too concerned about the approval of strangers. In other words, they are not concerned about being judged by others. (And you can tell this is true when they *spontaneously* do things like cry when they're hungry, sing/dance without warning, talk to themselves as they play, say things in public that make us parents embarrassed sometimes…and so much more.)

And if they want something, they'll express it in some way. And it doesn't even matter if you're busy talking to someone or not. They'll either tug on your arm or something (remember, they don't think there's anything wrong with interrupting a conversation)…or yell, *"I want milk."* (…anything to get your attention)

If they feel like singing, they'll just do it without first thinking to themselves: *"Is anyone looking at me? Will someone hear me?"*

9. Every outcome is just an experience. (Falling is falling…just that.)

> The secret of genius is to carry the spirit of the child into old age, which means never losing your enthusiasm.
>
> ~ *Aldous Huxley* ~

To kids, falling down does not mean "failure" or "losing face." (Again, the concept of looking foolish/awkward is not even in their minds yet.) You can confirm this by imagining a time when you were very young. I'm sure that when you saw another kid fall down after running, you didn't think to yourself, *"Oh, gee, look at that kid. He fell on his face. How embarrassing. What a loser."* Of course not.

What was probably going through your mind was more like: *"Hey, look at that kid run. Oh, and there he goes to the ground. Now, he's getting up and running again. Oh, and there he goes to the ground*

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again." (…and it just goes on like that without any negative opinion or judgment)

And because you wouldn't think that way towards others, you wouldn't expect others to think the same of you if you fell.

Can you see how powerful having this belief is?

I mean, what would you go for if you were not afraid of losing face? If you were not afraid of possible failure? (Remember, what we adults call failure are only "outcomes" to kids.)

10. It's okay to get back up if I fall…to try again and again…to persist until I like the results I get.

No one taught them that it's wrong to try again after getting certain results…that they're not allowed a second chance. And that if they don't get desirable results, they should be so ashamed of themselves that they shouldn't attempt again.

This is the reason why nearly all adults walk. When they were kids, and they were just learning to walk, they didn't give up after the first fall. They bravely got up again and again until they finally learned to walk.

11. It's okay not to know it all…not to have all the answers.

When kids are asked questions and they don't know the answers, they don't feel stupid. In other words, they feel it's okay to say, *"I don't know."* They have not been taught that it's wrong (or that they should feel bad about themselves) if they don't have all the answers.

Imagine how powerful this belief can be when it comes to meetings, speaking situations, or other forms of communication where you know there's a possibility that you can be asked a question you do not know the answer to.

If you always feel that you need to be perfect and know everything, you'll always feel nervous/anxious. But if you accept the fact that you don't have to know it all, and that it's okay to say, *"I'm sorry, but I don't know the answer,"* then you'll naturally be more relaxed.

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12. It's okay to ask others for help when I need it.

In fact, kids have been doing it since the time they were born. They expressed their desire for milk by crying. They haven't been taught to be fearful of asking, which could lead to rejection…which could then lead to pain ("emotional pain" as we adults would call it).

In other words, they haven't learned that asking for help is a sign of weakness…or that it's a shameful/fearful experience…therefore should be avoided at all costs.

I'm sure when an infant or young child is hungry, it wouldn't think the following: *"Wait a minute. Maybe I shouldn't cry to make it known that I'm hungry…and that I want milk. Maybe the neighbors will hear me and get angry with me and my mom. Gee, that would be so embarrassing. Not only that, my mom would probably get angry with me and not give me milk anymore. Oh, no! That's not good at all. Hmm, I think I'll just keep my mouth shut and starve."*

13. It's normal to want to learn things (or to learn how to do things)…and to ask questions when needed.

Although kids at a very early age don't know what "curiosity" actually means, there's no doubt they're filled with it.

They have this strong desire to discover/learn new things (or learn about "how to do" things…for example, kids show their eagerness to learn things themselves—things like pouring milk into a glass, eating on their own, and so on—by saying "I want to do it" or "I'll do it"). And more importantly, **they believe it's okay to ask questions…or to seek answers.**

In fact, there's a stage when they ask lots of questions. Questions like: *"What's this? Why does this thing do this?"* (…and so many more)

At times, they'll even go out of their way to find out about something they're truly curious about or interested in.

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I'm sure you've had experiences where you were so curious about something…where you wanted to know something so badly…that you did whatever it took (despite any internal or external resistance) to find out about it.

Well, that's also one of the great things about having a curious mind, it somehow draws out the courage required to conquer fears (fears that usually cause you to hesitate).

14. Aside from "falling" and "loud noises," everything else is okay/safe (or non-threatening).

When very young kids perform most things (or deal with most things), they don't think of whether they're dangerous or not…whether they will do them harm or not. (The truth is, they don't really think about the consequences of their actions.)

If you were to put a rattle snake in front of a young child, he would probably even try to play with it thinking it's a toy.

What we can learn from this is: Risk is relative. (Or, risk—or the level of risk—is in the mind of the beholder.) Basically, it's all about *perception.*

What many adults perceive as risk/danger (or perceive as a threat), kids perceive as safe or non-threatening.

That's why, as adults, we need to "be more aware" of whether something is "really" a threat (and should therefore be avoided)…or if it's only in our minds (it's only our perceptions, our beliefs, or our past negative programming that's creating the fear)…so as not to be prevented from doing what we ought to do.

In other words, we need to determine if it's a *rational* or *irrational* fear (an irrational fear is also called a phobia…ex. fear of dust, water, closed spaces, etc.)…and then behave accordingly.

Basically, our ultimate aim should be to balance the fearless quality of a child and the mature thinking of an adult (an adult's ability to judge/analyze whether or not a situation is a real threat or not).

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15. I can do what I want, whenever I want.

For one thing, kids at a very young age don't know the concept of right or wrong yet. (For example, they don't know that it's bad or wrong to touch the stove or iron.)

As a result, they just do it with a "Go, Go, Go" attitude (not knowing the possible consequences). (Sometimes, they feel they don't even need permission before doing anything. Especially the very young ones.)

Of course, as adults, we do things with more discretion or caution. Although it's not a bad thing, it can sometimes lead to paralysis (or the inability to act). It limits us in areas where we really need to go all out.

So, when you think about it, ignorance can "sometimes" be a good thing. (By being ignorant of the fact that something is impossible or undesirable, kids remain in empowered states…and just attempt.)

But, again, like I mentioned earlier, we need to aim for balance. The balance between having the courageous qualities of a child and the mature thinking (analytical/reasoning skills) of an adult.

16. Anything is possible. I can do (or be) anything I want.

Kids believe anything is possible (which puts them in a highly resourceful state for tackling challenges).

When asked what they want to be when they grow up, they will usually give a quick answer without thinking much about it. (In fact, I remember when I was little, I wanted to be an astronaut. I could actually picture myself on a rocket ship in outer space. And because no one ever told me it was impossible, I was already convinced it was possible. In other words, I had no shred of doubt whatsoever.)

Of course, I didn't actually pursue it. But my point is, because of my belief that it was possible, I put myself in a much better position to succeed (had I pursued it) than if I believed it was impossible.

Again, having empowering beliefs will empower you to go for what you want and will help increase your chances of attaining your dreams.

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17. I can do whatever I want without having to justify my actions or explain myself.

Kids simply do things because they feel like it.

They don't think ahead of time how they're going to justify something they plan to do.

And after they've done something, they don't exactly go out of their way to explain their actions. (This doesn't, of course, apply to a lot of older kids who already know what's appropriate and inappropriate behavior…to kids who know they'll be punished for doing something they're not supposed to.)

I'm sure you don't normally hear the following from very young children: *"Mom, Dad, I went on the slide because it seemed like it would be a great experience. I hope you won't be angry with me."* (as if to seek approval)

If they do say something, they would probably describe what they experienced. For example, they would say something like: *"Mom, Dad, going down the slide was so much fun!"*

The truth is, when my kids ask me to go to the mall and I ask them why they want to go (just to find out what they would say), they would usually answer me with: *"Because I want to."* (In other words, *they just feel like it*.)

Actually, I remember doing something funny in kindergarten. There was a time when I walked right up to a female classmate of mine and whispered in her ear: *"You know what? I think you're very pretty."* (And she smiled.)

Now, why did I do it? Well, all I remember is *I just felt like it* (I just felt like telling her that). I don't remember having a logical reason for doing it. (In fact, I don't even remember expecting a certain reaction.)

(Unfortunately, for many adults, they are held back from doing important things because they're too concerned about how they will justify their actions afterwards. They're afraid that if someone asked

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them why they did a certain thing, they wouldn't know what to say…or they may give a foolish answer. Basically, they are afraid of possible rejection.)

18. I know what I want and I'm going for it (…I'm getting it).

Kids usually know what they want and will express it openly or assertively. (It's very rare that when you ask a child what he wants, he'll answer with an "I don't know.")

> When you really want something, you'll amaze yourself at what you will do to get it.
>
> *~ Jack M. Zufelt ~*

Trust me, I hear the words "I want" from my kids a lot. In fact, they sometimes add the words "I want it now" (talk about speaking their minds) and they persist until I finally give in.

Understand that it's very important you know exactly what you want. Because when you do, the motivation/drive (and persistence) to get it will usually follow (especially if you want it badly enough).

19. It's okay to immediately take action on my ideas without thinking much about it.

When kids come up with an idea or feel like doing something, they don't over analyze. They don't wait until all conditions are perfect. They simply do it.

They don't think to themselves: *"Hold on. I first have to know everything there is to know about this. I have to wait until everything is just right before I act on this idea."*

In fact, when I was a kid, I remember there were times when I would see a chair right in front of me, imagine myself successfully jumping over it (which took only a split second), and then walk right up to it and do it (in other words, I would jump from a standing position…not run first before jumping). And I'd do it just because I felt like it…and for no other reason. And you know what? I'd always succeed.

(Mind you, I did this for a lot of other daring things. I was able to

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perform such feats because I did not "perceive" them as what many would consider "risky." Having that belief/mindset helped greatly then…and continues to help greatly in my adult life.)

Now, I'm not encouraging you to go out and do daring stuff like this, or to encourage your own kids to do it (unless you want to, of course). I'm merely trying to make a point.

Actually, two points.

First, that belief will influence *what you do* and *how you do it.*

And second, the more you analyze something (after you've come up with an idea), the bigger the chances that doubt will creep in…and you'll come up with all sorts of excuses not to take action or do something.

(And most of the time, that something that you should be doing or taking action upon may be what's important for you to reach your goals.)

20. It's normal to do something just for the sake of experiencing it.

For kids, doing or experiencing something is a reward in itself.

> If children grew up according to early indications, we should have nothing but geniuses.
>
> *~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe ~*

They don't do things to prove something or to get a certain reward (of course, as they get a little older, positive reinforcement helps).

As we learned earlier, when a child likes an idea in his head, he'll simply do it.

Imagine how much more you would accomplish/achieve if you weren't always thinking: *"Wait! What am I going to get out of this?"* or *"Hold on a minute. What's in it for me?"*

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21. It's okay not to be 100% in control (or it's okay to let go of being in control) while performing a task.

Now, unfortunately, this is a hard thing for many adults to do…to let go of being in control.

But for kids, they have not been taught that they need to be in complete control of situations. The concept of "control" is not even in their minds yet. They just deal with outcomes as they come along.

In other words, *they surrender completely to the process.* And as a result, they end up performing at peak levels.

(Plus, you know what important thing I've discovered? *The more you surrender to the process…or the more you let go of being in control…the more in control you actually feel.*)

22. It's okay to "enjoy the process" (and not be concerned about the outcome).

They haven't been taught differently. Again, kids are not concerned about the past or future…especially when they're in the middle of doing something.

They simply let go and surrender to the moment. They immerse themselves in what they're doing in the present moment…like nothing else matters.

In fact, they don't even monitor themselves in the middle of a task. They don't think to themselves: *"Do I look good right now? Does my face look okay?"*

I like what Chin-Ning Chu said when she said the following:

If you are not concerned about
the outcome of a circumstance,
you will experience no fear.
When you attach yourself to expectations,
anxiety and fear will overcome you.

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23. It's normal to be completely in the present moment…in the here and now…ALL THE TIME. To be completely immersed in what I'm doing…ALL THE TIME.

They haven't been taught otherwise. In other words, they have not been programmed in any way to be concerned about—or to focus on—the past or future…while doing or performing any task.

An example of focusing on the past would be to think about past failures, mistakes, etc. (Even positive thoughts like their past successes.)

And an example of focusing on the future would be to think of what would happen if they made a mistake and so on (in other words, they're not focused on all the possible consequences). Or how they would be rewarded if they achieved certain results.

> Children have
> neither past nor future;
> they enjoy the present,
> which very few of us do.
>
> *~ Jean de la Bruyere ~*

In fact, that's why kids in general rarely feel stress or anxiety. They're always living "in the present moment."

When you think about it, rarely do people feel stress/anxiety about the present (unless they are feeling physical pain, they are being pressured by someone to perform a task under a tight deadline, or the like).

I believe that *imagining the past or future in negative ways* is what causes most of the stress in people's lives.

Now, another important thing I would like to add is this: Kids at a very early age don't differentiate between "offstage" and "onstage" (being in front of an audience).

To them, there is no "invisible wall" that separates *being offstage* and *being onstage*.

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(A child around 1-2 years old either hasn't seen an actual stage yet…therefore does not know the concept of being onstage…or, has seen people being onstage…or in front of an audience…but does not perceive it as something different or unusual. The child only sees that the performers are doing something in front of an audience…and that's it…nothing more.)

For most adults, there exists this *invisible wall* (whether or not they're aware of it), where *offstage* on one side of the wall means "it's okay to be me" or "it's okay to be relaxed"…and *onstage* on the other side of the wall means "I need to be perfect so that the audience will accept and love me."

To very young kids (those who are not self-conscious yet), everything is "offstage." They believe it's normal to be their calm, natural selves *all the time*.

In fact, that's how they keep their naturalness when presenting to others (if you've ever watched the show, *Kids Say The Darndest Things*, hosted by Bill Cosby, you know exactly what I mean). They're practically in a state of "flow" (or they're practically performing at peak or optimal levels) all the time.

(I remember in my elementary school years in the Philippines, I would be asked to sing in front of the classroom a lot. And I would gladly do so *without any fear/nervousness whatsoever*. I realize now that I was able to remain in a *relaxed and empowering state* because I didn't treat "singing in front of an audience" any differently than "singing on my own at home." The *invisible wall* I talked about earlier simply did not exist. Now, I'm sure I'm not the only one who has experienced this. I'm sure many others remember experiencing this in their childhood. Whether it involves singing or other types of performances.)

So, now that you're aware how powerful having this belief is (especially if you regularly give presentations…or if your livelihood depends on giving effective presentations/performances), go ahead and adopt it.

Your life will transform.

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In Closing

True, there are many role models of courage…people we like to emulate when it comes to their ability to deal effectively with fear and anxiety/stress.

However, we tend to overlook the best role models of all when it comes to ***courage***…when it comes to ***fearlessness***…**CHILDREN (what we were all at one time).**

It's time to once again get in touch with that courageous part of ourselves…to **UNLEASH THE COURAGEOUS CHILD WITHIN**…so we can start living life to the fullest and reap the many rewards.

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