



Simply Abundant VIP Podcast Group Transcript

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Title Courage vs. Strength

Hey there, hi there, hello there. You are here [laughter]. And so am I. Isn't that pretty cool? I think so. All right, so strength versus courage. I love this topic because there are a lot of people who have a pretty mistaken identity about what strength is. Yeah, a mistaken identity because they think strength is so many things that it's not and courage-- most people don't even know what that is. Courage, in Latin, means strength of heart. I think I've mentioned that in some of my older podcasts, but it's true.

So some of us believe that when it comes to strength that it means to not say things that are true, to hold them in, and to be stoic, right? "Oh, don't say anything. You might upset the apple cart." Or, "Nobody needs to hear your weakness," or whatever. People have all sorts of things that they hold back, and they think it's stoic. And they think they're proud of themselves. "I kept quiet. I didn't say anything." Really? Where do you think all of that shit you held back went? Let's take a guess. Hmm, where could that be? I know! It's still inside of you.

You have some really fucked up feelings inside of you when you're holding things back, right? And they've got to come out somewhere. So they're just going to come out in either weird ways that you don't have control over, like you get triggered and you don't know why, right? You just all of a sudden fly off the handle or do things that are self-destructive in some fashion because holding this shit in is self-destructive. It is not nice.

So that is not courage, by the way. Acting like this all, by the way, all the stuff we keep in, is again, a sign of strength also means it keeps us alone, even if we're in a relationship. It's just a sign of pain, and the pain is chosen over living emotionally free and being happy, right? Because it's just so crazy to me how most people say their wish in life is to be happy, and they do everything they can to not be happy, to absolutely stand in the way of happiness. It is crazy. Absolutely it's almost insane a lot of the things [laughter] that we do. "I want this," and then we do the opposite.

It's like, "I'm not going to jump off that cliff," and then I jump off the cliff. Wow. How'd that happen? Because that's what we do. "Hey, I'm not going to bang my head on the wall." But, "Hey, I've got nothing else to do, so I think I'm going to go bang my head on a wall." That's what we choose to do on autopilot without even knowing it most of the time. So some people believe by hiding their feelings and not saying their truth that they're living an authentic life on top of all of this, where people respect them. And perhaps people respect them, but they're probably more than likely afraid of them, and that's not really respect. That's fear [laughter]. But hey, if people respect you or you think you have their respect but you probably don't have their loyalty or much else if you are not expressing anything of truth about yourself at all, and you probably feel pretty empty inside for that, as well.

Or you might feel full of stuff, full of shit. And for those that think that acting stoically or like you just don't care is a way of life, that is a well-lived life, as in a great sense of well-being.... you're kind of on the other side of the tracks with that one. It doesn't really add up. And what about those that say, "I'm so tough, try me. I'm so tough, I'm going to walk away," or, "I'm going to walk all over you," or, "I'm going to--" whatever? I'm so tough, do you think that you can get away with anything with me? Do you think I'm not going to notice?

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I'm your own favorite detective [laughter]. I know you're not getting away with shit. You think I can't read you? You think you don't-- whatever, okay? None of that is true because that is just an outward expression of inner fear. All of that is about fear. You can't do this to me. You can't do that to me. If you're a courageous person, nobody can do shit to you anyway because you get to choose how you feel. So even if somebody is an asshole, you still get to choose how you want to respond. You get to choose what you want to do with it.

But it's just interesting how the more controlling you are, the weaker you actually feel inside, and it's so true. Now, it doesn't make you a bad person. Again, none of the stuff I talk about is about making you a bad person. Please don't take it that way because it doesn't help anything; doesn't help you. You're just a human being who got the wrong manual [laughter]. You got some manual as a kid where it was "hey, do this." But really, it didn't serve you. You didn't know it. You watched the people around you. They probably acted very similar to how you act or there's some differences. I don't want to say we're all carbon copies of our parents because we're not, but there's differences. And yet, there's a lot of similarity.

So it takes no courage to do any of that. It just takes an intimacy, not an intimacy of love or intimacy that you want. It's an intimacy with pain, yeah, and suffering. Because to act tough, to act stoic, to act all of that shit is pain and suffering. Why people look up to that is beyond me. That's not a person who's connected to themselves. That's not a person who's happy, which is the goal of most people. Right? So what the hell are people doing? When I talk to people about the-- excuse me, the part they play in life, whether it's business or personal, I always look for those that have vulnerability. Because when people pretend or put up walls, it tells me we're unable to connect and that is all across the board in my life.

I tend to want to connect with people. I don't want to have to go, "Okay." So I'm not really dealing with somebody who's being authentic. I'm dealing with somebody who's inauthentic. And when I'm dealing with somebody who's inauthentic, I'm not really interacting with them, is how I feel. I feel like I'm interacting with another person. Right? And that's a bummer because you can't really have a true connection with someone who's not vulnerable, who's not being themselves. And it's not that I kick people to the curb, it's that I just don't put any energy into it.

It's like I used to hike with somebody and she always told me how she was happy and she wasn't. "Everything's fine. Everything's good." It wasn't, though. It was a very small life she lived, very controlled existence. And she had all sorts of issues, but she said she didn't have any. It was things like that. And it wasn't that I'm saying this to judge her because it's not a judgment. I'm just sharing her appearance, how she appeared to me. And so it was really difficult for me to connect. I didn't know where to connect. And because I could talk about me, and she'd be like, "Oh, that's too bad. I'm sorry." I didn't really say things for her to do that. I just said them so we could share our humanness, and it was just very, very challenging to feel, like I said, any sense of connection. Because when you're talking to somebody who's faking-- and not to say that she didn't have reasons for it. I believe she probably did have a lot reasons for it. Probably her own discomfort with things in her own life that made her feel like she was judging herself harshly, so she probably felt like others would judge her harshly as well. And I tried talking to her a few times about it, not saying, "Oh, you need to change," but trying to go, "Hey, so what's really going on in there?" Right? "What's up in there?"

And sometimes she would open up more and we'd have like a connection. And I'd be like, "Oh, wow. I feel connected." And other times, I didn't feel connected. And it just got to the point where if she connected, then she'd clam back up later on, you know, the next time I'd see her or what have you. And I don't know. It wasn't like I purposefully went, "Oh, I don't want to be around this person," but it just kind of happened over time. And when I looked back-- and it's only in hindsight that I thought, "Well, I could share about her because really, we think we're looking like we've got our shit together, like we're so strong, when we don't. And it's so hard to live in this society, I

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believe, where people feel judged all the time. We feel as though we're not good enough, we feel that people are judging us, that we compare ourselves, or we're told by other people. And so the idea of being strong, stoic, tough, whatever, comes in there and that's what people start doing. They start thinking, well, this is the way it has to be.

The other place I don't like to put energy into is the whole superior or inferior deal where it's one sided because I'm not superior or inferior to another human being, I just a human being. There's no way you can actually judge another human in that way. You may have certain likes and dislikes, but that doesn't mean that somebody is better or worse than you. It doesn't. You can look at the appearance and you can try and judge, and if you are, you are a very insecure person. Okay? Now, I'm not saying this to be mean, I'm saying, "Look at your insecurities." See, all this stuff I talk about is a great opportunity to unearth this within yourself so can feel better. Okay? Because what I'm talking about doesn't feel good. Right? I don't think so. I don't think trying to one-up people or look like, "I'm extra special, and I'm so tough, and I take on everything...."

That's another one. People who take on everything. Everything. "Oh, here, I'll do it, I'll do it, I'll do it." That person doesn't feel good about themselves either. They're trying to prove that they're acceptable. They're trying to show how strong they are. "Wow. Look at her. She's so strong. She does this, this, this, and this. Oh, my God. I just am in awe." But you don't get close to that person [laughter], and that person's not close to themselves because they're not taking care of themselves. They're not saying, "Hey, I need a break." Or, "Somebody please help me." They're not saying that. They're waiting for people to run up and volunteer. They're waiting for people to have ESP and figure it out. And, quietly, they boil inside because you're not figuring it out, so they get to look like they're so strong. And, to me, it's not strength.

There are reasons that people do what they do. I'm not saying that, "Hey. You know what? You've got a tough life, and this means that if you do a lot of things or you have to take things on for survival, that doesn't necessarily mean you're strong. It means that you are resilient. You are taking things on. You are doing what you have to do, but it has nothing to do with emotional strength," is my point. Okay? Because, as usual, this is all about emotional strength.

Sure, there's people that are physically strong. Right? But that doesn't have anything to do with emotional strength either. This is the deal. Emotional strength is what's going to make you happy [laughter], and that takes courage. Right? So when it comes to our relationships and how we seek validation or others seek validation from us, right, the problem with that is we're always on a teeter-totter. We're either waiting, or we're hoping, or something. We're waiting to react and go, "Oh. I'm acceptable. I'm okay." Or we're waiting to react in a way that says, "I'm strong. Fuck you." Right? That's another one, "I don't need your shit. Get out of here. I'm fine."

You know those people that break up with someone and they've been together a long time and that night they're out partying and having a good time and acting like, "Yeah. I don't need them." That's such bullshit. All they've done is gotten really good at compartmentalizing. Their sock drawer is perfect inside of them. Okay [laughter]? It's really about that when they have that kind of attitude. If you've really, let's say, processed your relationship and you go out, that's a different story. But when you are not processing it and you're acting like you don't give a shit, yeah. That's not real.

So when you act tough, at all, you're wanting somebody to respond to give you validation because you need somebody to say, "You are cool," or, "You are this," or, "You are that." And nobody's saying anything. That can leave you feeling pretty fricking lonely. It really can. And then, of course, when you are needing to be tough and needing people to tell you how great you are or how strong you are, you really are in a state of emptiness, and you're not going to get people close to you when you're being that way. I mean, that's the thing. "Oh, wow. They

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don't give a shit. Look at them." Well, who's getting close to that person? No one. Why? Because that person's emotionally unavailable. They're not available for anything. When I hear people tell me what an asshole the person they're with, or the world is, or what have you. It doesn't serve anything. It really serves nothing. I had a client one time go-- I was explaining a story to this person. And I think that first of all when it comes to most people, they don't realize how holding onto anger, okay? Or ignoring people is not tough and not strong, and they're not teaching anybody anything. All they're doing is making themselves miserable. So whenever you got that hot coal, I'm sure you've heard that, the hot coal? Whoever's holding the hot coal, right? It's like you're holding a hot coal, so why wouldn't you want to live a happier life?

This is about living a happier life. This isn't about, "Oh, I'm going to let people walk all over me." That's not what courage is, that's for sure. That's not really the point of having wellbeing. But I had a client, yeah, who was very hell bent on remaining stuck and staying stuck to the degree that she just caused herself so much misery because she was so afraid of taking any responsibility. Therefore, she would not look like she was tough or she was strong. But in essence, she looked like the victim because whoever she was angry with had her power. And she couldn't see it. Couldn't see it, didn't want to let go of it, felt like it would make her a bad person. And you can't force people to do these things. So look in the mirror. Where are you acting tough? Where do you think-- and from the ways that I've described strength, where are you doing that? You want to get out of your way. If you want to be happy, you want to get out of your way.

So when people use, let's say, certain language or actions that show they're tough or strong to get validation, and it's not real, it's inauthentic. When I look at it, I already have said I think weakness. I don't know that person looks tough. I think they look lonely. I think they look insecure. I think they look like they need a good friend but they don't know how to be one to themselves to begin with. And so, it's always going to be a need for validation. You're going to demand people respect you. You're going to demand things from people they're not really going to give you. It may look like it, but they're not really giving you anything real because you don't give yourself anything real.

It takes a lot of courage to actually say what's true for you. It takes more courage. That's harder, it's not weaker. Harder to say what's true. And that's not going around telling people they're fucked up and everybody's fucked up and everything's wrong in the world. That's not what I'm saying. That doesn't take any courage. That's complaining and that's whining. And that's trying to change people and not looking at yourself, okay?

And you don't get too far with it and, unfortunately, people think that they will. Look at the ideology of politics; I'm right and you're wrong and it's just not true. There is so much gray area with human beings and why human beings do what they do and what turns a human being on. A lot of it has to do with your belief system. And some of us don't even know how we got our belief systems. They just appeared [laughter] because that's how it works.

We often, in trying to be strong or tough or stand our ground, reject things that don't fit our belief system. And we say it's wrong. And we say it's greater or it's-- I shouldn't say greater than courage, but it takes more courage, actually, then it does less courage. It takes courage to step back from your ideologies, from your belief system and being inquisitive and open and, perhaps, go, "I don't know what the truth is." Even though you can have things showing up, whether it's in your life, your personal life, or it's politically, because that's just all over the place right now, kind of hard to miss, right? So, you know, you can do that.

My son and I have these conversations, which are quite interesting. Yes, I have an old son [laughter]. That's how I refer to him. He's my oldest, so he's old son. So we have these conversations as he had a minor in philosophy in college. He majored in finance, and he has parts of his brain that work a lot better than mine in those-- well, at least

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in the finance category [laughter]. Philosophy is one of those things where it's neither person is superior or inferior, truly. I don't believe so because it just depends on what resonates with your belief system, right?

But when it comes to philosophy, he and I will have very interesting conversations. He and I share a value system, but we don't share the same ideology. Although, he thinks we do in a certain way and when he explains it, I go, "Okay. Yeah." And it's not that we have to be in agreement is my point. I'm sharing this because we don't have to be. I'm saying that other people believe what they do. And instead of being mad at them and acting tough, like, "Oh, you better change. I can't believe you believe that." You know, belittle-- excuse me, belittling people. That's not a sign of strength either, but that's what we do.

We get into these situations, and we just feel like we've got to convince somebody else that our way is the right way, so we can be a-- we'll strong-arm people. We'll push our will against them. That's not strength either. The courage would be to, actually, listen to what someone has to say if they think differently than you in any situation, any situation. To just listen. It doesn't mean you're going, "Yeah. I agree." But what it does is it gives you some insight instead of getting angry or feeling like you're going to push somebody around. It gives you insight into what that person is thinking. What makes them tick? And if that's what you want because you're going to act in a way that's offensive to them or you're going to put them down, which is offensive, you're going to do something that says, "I'm stronger. I'm better. I'm smarter. I'm anything," right, that makes them feel shame, you're not going to get far. You're not doing anything.

You're not strong. You're weak. Because to be strong is not the same as most of us define it. It's not being a bully. It is truly to do the things that are hard to do. That is courage, okay? And courage is sitting there listening to somebody say whatever it is, whether it's about you or their belief system, but not taking it personally. That takes courage. It takes a hell of a lot of courage because you can't react as though they're saying it's about you. And if they are saying it's about you, it's still about them. Okay. That's a hard one.

Most of us struggle with taking people personally because of that. I've had to work through my own shit about this. I mean, I'm not perfect, at all. And I don't perfectly do things. And there's times where I could take something personally, although I don't really take too much personally anymore. I realize that that's someone else's opinion. But I don't act like I'm tough either. I don't act like I'm strong. I don't act okay, and strength a lot of times is an act. If I do all these things, I'm going to be strong. Not all the time. Sometimes people feel like hardship makes them strong. But really I have to say, "In what way?" Resilient? Everybody is resilient if they allow themselves to be. It depends on your conditioning. It depends on how you perceive yourself in the world.

And a lot of us mistake strength as something that is out there. "Well, I survive this and I survive that." Sometimes it took ingenuity. Sometimes that took belief. Sometimes surviving was a matter of saying, "Hey, I want to get back up and try it again." for whatever reason. We say, "Oh, that's strong." And in a sense, it could be, but really when it comes to emotionally being a place of understanding that yeah, that stuff is a character builder, but really do you need a character builder in that way? Not really. You don't. Because true strength is the ability to have courage, is the ability to say what's true all the time, to say your feelings, to say what it is.

Again, your feelings aren't about other people. They're not like, "Hey, you're an asshole." Mm-mm. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about again emotional strength, and I had a hard time looking at the fact that I at times struggle. Like what I'm talking about, I struggled. I used to struggle to listen to somebody else telling me that they believe something different because I was smart. What are you talking about? Oh, no, no, no. You don't believe what I do? Well, there's a big problem here. I don't do that anymore because I don't believe this whole right

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and wrong bullshit, because life is gray. Life is not black and white, and yet we seem to think in terms of black and white.

And we apply that to our emotions, and our emotions aren't black and white. And so understanding yourself and others on a deeper level really can set you free. It can set you free from trying to be tough. You're not going to need to prove it. You're not going to want to prove it. It's not going to matter because in essence, it just doesn't matter. And so you don't want to shame. You don't want to bash people, but we tend to do that over and over when we don't understand what real strength is.

And that whole idea of somehow, "I'm right. I'm better. I'm stronger. I'm tougher," it's a huge waste of energy. And the deal is, all of that means self-empowerment is not any of those things. Self-empowerment is stating your truth. It is taking care of yourself. See, with courage, you can be scared. You can be afraid of things and you can say it. Because living with courage means you're living, not just surviving. When you're acting tough, you're kind of in survival mode. Whenever you watch those action movies and everybody's tough, what are they doing? They're surviving [laughter]. They're not thriving at all, so there's a huge difference.

We're put on this planet to actually enjoy our lives. We're not put on this planet to suffer, even though a lot of us think so. It's how much we struggle against life that creates that. It is our struggle to have our way, and a lot of times people think, "Well, if I'm tough I'm just going to bully my way through, or I'm going to barrel my way through." And then the results are never what makes you feel happy. You may feel vindicated for a moment, but you're not going to feel connected. You're not going to feel peace. You're going to just be thinking thoughts, perhaps of strategy, or how you can overpower other people and get your way, how you're going to be tougher, so you win, so they lose.

Or you prevail and you cast fear into their hearts, especially those that don't agree with you. It's a shitty way to live. It is tiring and a waste of time. It's a waste of your time, your life. You're not really living. And I say that-- you want to imagine yourself having a wall, okay, in the middle of the field. Let's say this wall is 10 feet high and it's not around anything for miles. And you're standing at the wall and you don't know how to get around it, and you think, "Maybe I'll paint this color and that'll help." Right? Like all of a sudden, if I paint the color, it'll make me standing by this wall more tolerable. And so you paint the wall. It's 10 feet high, 10 feet wide. And you feel, "Hmm, maybe I could get around the wall. But I don't know how." Or you think, "Oh, I better do something heroic and I got to be smarter than the wall." And so, besides painting it different colors, you start to think, "Maybe if I scale the wall. I'm a pretty tough person. I'm strong. I'm just going to scale the wall." Right?

And that's the way you're thinking of getting around the wall. You're not looking at going around either side, by the way. You're looking at going over the wall, right? So you're stuck because you're really like thinking, "Am I that strong? Can I pull myself up over it?" And then you think, "Well, maybe if I drill a hole through it. What if I drill a hole and I go through it?" Well, actually, most people don't do that. What they do instead is they take a spoon and they never really make any progress, and they try to dig their way through the wall. And they stay behind the wall kind of digging their way through and going through some very painful times because that's got to be very exasperating to dig through a wall that you don't even have to have there in the first place is my point.

Instead of wondering what the wall is doing there or how they helped create it and what good it's not doing them, they're just sitting there pondering and going, "Well, I could try this. I could try that." All these strategies. "Maybe I can take it apart brick by brick," right? People stand at their walls their whole lives performing, acting, being this person. I have air quotes going. This person that's an upstanding citizen of some sort where people think you're so strong. "Oh, you are so strong." And what they don't recognize is that they're the ones who have been holding up

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this wall in the first place and that they had a choice and that they could experience freedom, but they would need to actually feel their feelings and deal with what built that wall in the first place. Because there's freedom all around them, but they can't see that they don't see to the sides that it's only 10 feet wide. It's their perception. So they may have to go, "Okay. In my arrogance of believing that this wall was put here by someone else, not me, and I'm standing behind it, that maybe I need to see the truth about myself. I need to see that I have a lot of trouble with where I've been weak."

And this is something that drives people to be strong, is the perception of what is weak. Maybe they were told they were weak. Maybe they feel like they're weak and they're overcompensating. "And I don't want to be that weak again. I'm not going to let that happen." So they're protective, as this is their strength. "Okay, I'm going to protect myself." But really, there's no such thing. It's impossible to protect yourself. You really can't. But they try, and that's why the hard outside has a soft inside, and not like soft and gooshy, get close to me. It's soft and it doesn't want to be hurt. So they'll go to all sorts of measures to protect themselves, to be strong, to be tough.

And unfortunately, they'll have a wall their whole life, until they start looking at why they can't accept those parts of themselves that are, in their mind, weak. And they're not really weak. This is the thing. Most things don't equate to weakness to me, in terms of emotionally weak, except for false bravado and actually thinking that you're tough. So when we talk about this, and people don't see themselves as they are, and they see themselves as this projection of a strong, tough person, they're doing themselves a disservice because they're really just saying, "I'm scared shitless and I don't know what to do, so I'm just going to act this way and maybe people will stay away from me," because that's what you also want.

On the one hand, you want people to come close and love you and care for you and respect you, but on the other hand, you can't let down your guard. You can't let people close. So you're not going to have anybody get close, it's impossible. Nobody's built that way. Nobody is made like a robot. And it's true. Some people wait for someone to come along and blast the wall, take that wall down for them, or maybe give them some kind of a roadmap on how to get around the wall. "Could you build me a bridge over the wall?" But we never do because when you go around the wall, you're going to have to deal with yourself on the other side because the wall is your protection, right?

So your goal wouldn't really be to go around the wall, to begin with, not at all. You'd want to stay behind the wall because it's safe, but it's really not. So your facade, your anger, your strength is your wall, and that makes it look impenetrable. But then there's you. It's kind of like the Wizard of Oz, right? Who's behind the curtain? And it's just a guy [laughter]. You're just a person. We're just people. And it's the same sort of thing.

We're trying to project some other image and it doesn't bring us emotional intimacy, and that is what every single person on the face of the planet craves, who is emotionally or mentally healthy, I should say, but craves it. And then we do everything we can to not have it. Maybe tomorrow. Maybe the next day. Maybe someday. Maybe when I meet that person and so on and so forth. And that's just a disservice to do yourself. It's a total disservice. Because to really live is to be courageous and to speak what's true, not to speak so you're manipulating. And people do it all the time. We say stuff to other people to get them to either see us in a certain way or to basically act in a way that's acceptable to us, something of that nature. And it does no service because it feels like shit. It really does. You've got to be willing to do for you, and that means to be your own best friend, your own well-being, to drop your helmet, drop your shield, drop your sword, drop it. It's not going to save you. It's just going to make you unhappy.

People don't have to earn your trust. That's the stupidest thing in the world. Because there is no way to do that. And I know I speak a lot about these things like you can't hold other people accountable. You can if you want to

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make yourself miserable. You have no control over other people is my point. But somehow we think we do. "Well, if I give them my trust because they are acting perfectly, great." And then they do something stupid. "Oh my God, they lost my trust." No. It's that you have to trust yourself to handle it. That's where the trust needs to be because that's the only control you have. We don't control other people. We may try. We may get away with it for a little bit. "Look, they're coloring in between the lines. Everything is okay." And then when they color outside of the line, you have a fucking heart attack.

Well, again, you had no control. What are you going to do? Punish them? Probably. If you're tough, you are, right? Well, fuck that. You're lonely, and that's no fun. So anyways, when you want to take the easier road, the road of ease, all right, and get rid of the wall and start feeling your feelings and stating your truth, which again-- I reiterate this all the time because people still do it and I hear it in so many discovery sessions, and even among some of my clients. The blaming of other people. "This person's an asshole. This person did this. This person did that." And I'm like, "What do you want from him?" Really. What do you want? You want them to crawl up on your doorstep and beg? And you're so tough? "Oh, I don't need your shit anymore." Okay. How do you feel inside about that? I think it kind of feels empty, don't you? Feels pretty charged. Feels like everything's outwardly directed. Feels like you're being controlled by your outside circumstances, doesn't it?

Is there some strength in that that I'm not aware of? I don't think so. That's what I'm talking about. Drop it. You will be happier. You will feel like you have choices. You'll be in the flow of life. You'll feel, I would say, the most connected you could possibly feel to life, to spirituality, to other people, to love, to-- you name it, okay? But you're not going to get there by being tough. You're not going to get there by blowing up your wall and then replacing it with another wall. You're not going to get there by blaming. You're not going to get there by bullying. You're not going to get there by any kind of intimidation. It's just not going to work. Or manipulation. Those can be your lessons on the way. Sure, plenty of lessons. Have them. Why not?

If you need a lesson, then you can do these things. And sometimes you do. And don't be mad at yourself. If you keep acting tough or you keep acting distant, strong, whatever you want to call it, and it's all the same to me, if you want to do that, then it's just going to be painful. And you may need that. Sometimes we need to keep disappointing ourselves over and over. Sometimes we need to keep repeating these same patterns because then if we can repeat these same patterns, what ends up happening is then we can say, "See? I told you so. See? I can't let my guard down. See? Life fucks me every time. See? The universe sucks." Blah, blah, blah. And then we just toughen up, right? And we go about our day and we think, "Okay, motherfucker. Fuck with me. Come on. Fuck with me." And then we pick a fight. Do we ever feel better? Do you feel a sense of kind of false bravado or perhaps you feel validated for a moment, something?

But that's not real. It doesn't last because it's from the outside in. The inside is suffering. The inside is not alive. It takes courage. Instead of saying to people, "I want to fight you," say, "I want to love you." If you say to people, "Hey, look, I'm just a human being trying to do what I'm doing. I'm not perfect. I'm not there. And I really want to be close, and yet all I do are things that stand in the way of that." Admitting that to people, that's pretty big. And fortunately when you can't get past what you think has been done to you, you will keep staying a victim. "Well, this happened. And that happened." And that's funny, isn't it? "Well, this happened to me in the past, and I'm not going to let that happen again."

That whole statement right there is a victim statement. "I'm not going to let that happen again." Really? What are you going to do? Because all your power is outside of you, you're going to try to control other people by being tough? You're going to control other people by making statements, and they better not cross them? What are you going to do? You're not going to do something that makes you happy that way. That's for damn sure. Because you

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have to own your shit. We all have to own our shit. And owning your shit and living from this place where you emotionally experience life is courageous.

Instead of the struggle being real that you've created, because you can't deal with your shit, you can't deal with your own problems. You can't deal with what-- and I'm saying your own problems. They're problems you created. Other people create problems, absolutely. But do you participate? You always have a choice. And even when you don't think you have a choice, you have a choice. You always have a choice. It may not be what you want it to be, but you will. And as long as you hold other people accountable, like I said before, for your insides, you're not going to ever really have a real choice. You're just going to keep moving in a circle behind that wall and digging your way out with a teaspoon.

You'll have no concept of emotional freedom, as long as other people are actors in your life. You'll never know emotional freedom as long as you stay behind the wall and act tough, or want everyone else to be wrong and you be right. You will suffer. And you will be choosing to suffer. So when you want to stay stuck in, "I'm strong. I'm going to be tough. Fuck everybody. Fuck you," you're not going to be happy. And that is the bummer.

So what can you do? What did I say? Have some courage. What would be a courageous act? You can tell what would be a courageous act if you actually stop yourself from taking an action that you would normally take. If you stop and go, "I'm not going to take that action," and you sat with your discomfort you would understand what it was that was driving that action. You would feel it, and you'd be like, "Oh my God. I'm feeling that feeling of..." whatever it happens to be, right? Angst. Or sadness. And you can keep getting deeper the more you'd feel it.

"What else am I feeling? Well, I'm feeling this, I'm feeling that." And then it's going to tell you why you take that action and why you don't need to take that action. And just keep feeling your feelings and then you release them, you breathe through them, you let them go. And then you don't do that action anymore over time because as often as you can catch it like that you'll break the habit. And you can even tell other people what you're doing. "You know, I'd normally react this way," or, "I'd normally take this action," but I'm not going to do it anymore because I found that it's not coming from a place inside of me that's authentic. It's coming from a place inside of me that wants to come off as tough or strong or seeming like I got my shit together. And I really don't. I'm just like everybody else. I'm just trying to figure it out.

That is a whole other way to come across. But try it. See how easy it is. It's not. One action a day. Take any action today, whatever it happens to be. The other choice is to take an action, an action that's emotionally inspired that you don't take. You're really doing the opposite. What would you never do? What would you never do? "Well, I'd never apologize to him or her." Oh, maybe you might want to. Not because you owe it to them. You owe it to yourself. If you feel guilty, if you feel shame, you feel bad, you might need to say something. "I feel shameful for this, and I don't want to feel shameful," and it has nothing to do with somebody else forgiving you. It's just getting this crap out of your body [laughter], you know?

You don't want it to be a junkyard, an emotional junkyard. You want to get rid of your emotional junkyard. Start getting rid of the pieces and parts because you want to be at peace. You want to be happy. So anyways, folks, I hope you've enjoyed this lovely podcast today and the difference between strength and courage because it takes a lot of courage to speak your truth. And I do it all the time. I really do even when it could mean loss, and that takes courage. And I'm not saying this like, "Ooh, I'm so courageous." I'm saying this because I don't have an emotional junkyard inside of me. That doesn't mean I don't have things come up, because they do, but it's how I do it. It's what I do with it. It's if I do anything with it besides feel it. I try to do something that takes me out of my comfort

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zone but is an alignment with who I'm authentically being, being me. I'm not trying to get something or have an outcome happen, not at all.

And that is so cool to me because I used to have [laughter] probably more than one emotional junkyard, you know, and one mall in the middle of a field. I probably had 50 of them in 50 different fields. Because I thought that was the way to go. I was strong. I was tough. Nobody was going to intimidate me. And that was a big thing, "Oh, you're not going to intimidate me." Nobody was going to intimidate me. So, anyway, that is what we do, and it's a painful way to live and I just don't choose it anymore. So you don't have to choose it either if you're living this way. You can choose to be courageous and open yourself up and create emotional space that way. See, when you're letting all the shit out of you, you're creating emotional space for new experiences that could be phenomenal, at least more peaceful and on the road to happiness. All righty, guys. That will do it. Have a good one. Bye-bye



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