

# Guideline 16 : Courage



Humility	Respect
Patience	Forgiveness
Contentment	Gratitude
Delight	Responsibility
Kindness	Principles
Honesty	Aspiration
Generosity	Service
Thoughtful Speech	▶ Courage 16
16 Guidelines for Life <a href="http://www.16Guidelines.org">www.16Guidelines.org</a>	

## Character Guide: Cofi Courage

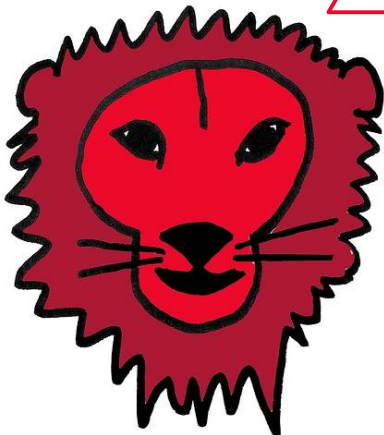


**Cofi braves**  
difficulties and challenges  
to do the right thing.



The guides' positive chants help you to remember the most important ideas. Say these over and over to remember them.

**Let's**  
**think big,**  
**be brave,**  
**now begin!**



“Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.' ”

-- Mary Ann Radmacher,  
writer/artist, USA



Keep going



## Begin!

Get all the best ideas  
from everywhere you can.  
Decide on what's important  
and make your action plan.

Be a force of nature,  
move minds and mountains too.  
Be the change you want to see  
and let your light shine through.

An ocean starts with just one drop,  
an avalanche one snowflake.  
The journey of a thousand miles  
starts with the step that YOU take.

This is a beginning.  
It will not be the end  
if you will keep on chanting:

Think big, be brave, begin.  
Think Big, be Brave, Begin.  
Think BIG be BRAVE, BEGIN!

**THINK BIG, BE BRAVE, BEGIN!!**

Start

## Courage Activities



### Try it now: The 'Write' kind of courage

How does it feel to have courage compared to not having it? You may use one type of courage to deal calmly with the challenges that come when you get hurt or sick or lose a loved one or find yourself in a dangerous situation. It takes another type of courage to admit when you have made a mistake or accidentally broken something or to apologize if you have said something you regret.

It takes yet another kind of courage to voluntarily take on a challenging task or to try something new or unfamiliar. This is true for everyday tasks as well as big tasks like helping to reverse deforestation or end child labor.



Craig Kielburger was 12 when he started to fight for the rights of children. His youth driven organization '[Free the Children](#)' helps many young people worldwide who are in poverty, exploited or powerless. Explore how it feels to try something new in this experiment.

#### Experiment/Notice:

#### The Challenge to Get it 'Write'

Write your name. Now try writing it with your other hand. Try writing it with eyes closed. Try writing it with your foot! How do you feel as you try this new activity? Does it make you nervous? Do you worry what other people think? What kind of self-talk is going on in your own head? Now sit calmly and take three slow, deep breaths to help your body calm down and focus. You may be able to concentrate better now. Give it another try. What do you notice?



As you choose to take on new challenges you can accomplish more with a relaxed mind. Give that little voice that is always judging, praising or criticizing a well-deserved rest. When you are doing challenging, important work you might feel less relaxed, but that is a good time for you to keep a light attitude, have fun and be cheerful. Being purposeful and positive will not only help you, it will also help those around you to be calm and accomplish more. Strive to keep smiling, be kind, and not take yourself too seriously, whatever you are doing.



## Try it now: **Brave or irresponsible?**

Sometimes courage is confused with risky action. It is not courageous to put yourself or others at risk for no reason. That is irresponsible. There are plenty of meaningful challenges without jumping into pointless ones.

Some purposeful challenges involve risks. The life of Wangari Maathai has included many dangers as she has grown from a barefoot girl walking to school to be the first woman in her region of Africa with a doctorate degree.



Along the way Professor Maathai faced economic hardship, threats, imprisonment, public criticism for her activist efforts, and was divorced by her husband.

In the 1970's Professor Maathai began the [Greenbelt Movement](#) which has now planted 30 million trees to reverse the deforestation that ruined her family's land and livelihood. In 2004 she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. She says that when she is focused on improving a situation she doesn't see the dangers or let her mind focus on the fear.

"If you understand and you are disturbed, then you are moved to action. That's exactly what happened to me."

-- Professor Wangari Maathai, Kenya





When my daughter was small she came up with the idea that positive challenges are like stretching a rubber band. You want to stretch yourself, to grow, to learn, to do, but to keep aware if you are reaching a point of damage where you might lose your flexibility for future challenges.

### Experiment/Draw:

### Stretch

You will need a rubber band, a pencil and a big piece of paper. It will be easier to do the second part if you have a partner. Trace around the rubber band. Predict how far you will be able to stretch the rubber band without danger of breaking it. Now stretch it a little and trace it again. Can you stretch it to twice its original length? Three times? Try NOT to break the rubber band. Stop before it's too late. Draw the biggest stretch you are comfortable with. That may be different from someone else's level, and that's okay. It is not a contest. What is your capacity to take on new challenges before you get stretched too thin? Could your rubber band stretch a little more? Can you?



Learn Grow Try Serve



## Try it now: Learning to trust, to live and let live



You can practice having courage by taking small risks in safe ways, like playing “Catch me.”

### Game:

### Catch me

Ask three people you trust to stand in a tight circle around you. Close your eyes and slowly start to fall backwards from standing, keeping your body stiff and straight. The three people stop you from falling further by putting their palms against your back. Take it in turns to be caught. This trust will help you get stronger by showing that you can overcome fears. It is an example of how to ask for help as well as how to support others when they are having a challenging time. Don't let them down!



”Life is mostly froth and bubble  
Two things stand like stone  
kindness in another's trouble  
and courage in your own.”

-- Adam Lindsay Gordon,  
poet, Australia

### Promise:

### Don't bug me

Are you afraid of spiders or insects? They are so small and you are so big. They have much more reason to be frightened of you. Are you in the habit of not liking them or are they a real danger? Make a promise for a day not to kill anything, not even bugs. No fly swatting, no ant squashing. Could you watch where you step so you don't accidentally crush someone underfoot? Talk with adults you trust about what might be a danger where you live, and learn how to take creatures who should not be inside to the outside safely.



## Try it for real: Dare to shed the 'should'.



Which takes more courage -- to accept a challenge to do something you know is wrong or dangerous, or to refuse to do it? Sometimes it takes a lot of courage to do the right thing. Even when you know which choice would be better, you may want to avoid that choice just because you “should” do it. Sometimes “should” makes it feel like you are giving up your power.

To make a shift in how you think try changing the words you use from “I should do that” to “It would be a better choice if I did that.” Replace your judgmental “should” with a more empowering phrase so it is easier to make the choice that is right for you.

### Notice/Reframe:

### Replace to keep your power

This week notice when you say or think the word “should”. Replace it with “It would be better if...” as you speak to others, in your self-talk and as you make choices. Notice if it helps you to be more courageous when you feel you are coming from this place of strength, so that you can say 'no' when that would be the better choice for you.



SHOULD  
BHOULD  
BEOULD  
BETULD  
BETTLD  
BETTED  
BETTER



## Try it for real: Fail faster and achieve great success!



Do you not do things you would like to try because you are afraid you might not be good at them? Most things are not so important that it matters that you do them perfectly, especially as you are learning. You fell down as you learned to walk or ride a bicycle, and probably don't worry or think about that anymore. Everyone, from scientists to musicians, makes lots of mistakes while learning something new. This is normal.

If you only try things you are good at you will rob yourself of many things that are worthwhile to do even if you never get "good at them".

The important questions about how you spent your time will be: Did you have fun? Did you learn something? Did you help someone? As you decide what to try, instead of asking "Will I be good at that?" ask "What's the potential for fun, learning, and helping?" You can [read more about this](#) on the website for the [Greater Good Science Center](#).

Sometimes it helps to ask, "What's the worst that could happen?" Some of the things we worry about are not that important, or won't last because things are always changing. Decide if the challenge is worth the risk considering the potential for growth or benefit.

### Observe:

### Fear of Failure

Watch yourself this week. What challenges come your way? Do you back away from them or embrace them? Are you afraid to try new things or are you willing to make mistakes to learn? Notice how it feels if you back down or if you go for it.



"Genius? Nothing! Sticking to it is the genius! I've failed my way to success!"  
-- Thomas Edison, inventor, USA.

## Try it for real: Living the Courageous Legacy of the 16 Guidelines



Who do you know personally who has done something courageous? Who else have you heard about who has been brave? What have you done that took courage on your part?

### Photograph/Draw:

### Caught you Being Good

Imagine there is a photo contest to show 'Courage' in action. See if you can catch someone 'doing good' this week, someone being brave and taking great responsibility or showing one of the other 16 guideline qualities you've been reading about. Use a camera (disposable ones are very cheap) to take their picture or draw them. Send us a copy of the picture or drawing you like the best. We'd love to see them!



COURAGE



You have been reading *Ready Set Happy* and thinking about these ideas so are becoming an expert with personal experience of the 16 guidelines. I wonder if, in your opinion, you think these issues apply in a meaningful way to your life today.



“The minute we follow the Guidelines,  
our lives change.”

-- 16 Guidelines for Life, the Basics



**For real for real:**

**Live the Legacy**

Imagine if you put these 16 Guidelines into practice in your life. What would it feel like to be living this wisdom? Would you be happier? Are you brave enough to move your reality closer to this vision? To evolve? Can you take all you have learned by playing with the 16 Guidelines and use it as part of your personal toolkit on your journey to build a happy life for yourself and others?

Can you plan how to put this into practice? One part of your plan may be from now on to keep one of the guidelines in mind each week so you don't forget the most important ideas. At the beginning of each week review the Instant Replay for that guideline to see if you still remember the answers.

The Guidelines have the potential to bring peace not only to yourself but to your parents, family, society, country and eventually to the whole world.



What wonderful potential! A glass of water has the potential to cure your thirst, but you have to be the one to drink it.

The Guidelines are like a delicious drink on a hot day, but what good comes of them is really up to YOU!

Ready...  
Set...  
Happy!



# Instant Replay for Courage:

