

Study Guide

Fearless Voices: True Stories by Courageous Women



Dedication

To All the readers:

We honor your journey, your voice, and your heart.
Your words matter.

Our stories are dedicated to you.

We encourage you to write your story now.

We are listening.

A Blessing From Dr. Carla Goddard

Oh, Great Spirit, Creator of All Things
Whose voice I hear in the whispering winds,
Whose breath gives life.
We come to receive Your blessing, Your wisdom and Your strength,
That we may all walk in beauty,
Have eyes that see the purple sunset
Have ears that hear Your whispers.
We ask that all who have healed their voice,
Have a voice that speaks the wisdom of the ancients,
A voice that echoes the resounding heartbeat.
We ask that all who have come to find healing,
Have a voice restored.
That the voice speak the authentic truth of the soul
And through this healing,
A song is sung
to ease the pain, mend the broken bones, and bring a wholeness once more.
The medicine of the voice spoken in truth
become a gift in the lives of each who have spoken them,
become a gift in the lives of each who read them,
that they too find the medicine to heal their voice.
We blow the ashes to the winds that the heartbeat rises once more.

mwah

Aho!

Dr. Carla Goddard

Sacred Soul Shaman

<http://www.igniteyoursoul.wildapricot.org/IYSabout>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #blessing #carlagoddard #sacredsoulshaman
#igniteyoursoul #spokenintruth #courage #fearless

Introduction to Study Guide

By Andrea Hylén

Fearless Voices was the first Heal My Voice project, grown from the seed of Evolutionary Women and the book *Conscious Choices: An Evolutionary Woman's Guide to Life* and inspired by Claudia Carawan's song, *Fearless*. Reading the stories now, six years later, I am reminded of how we become courageous during times when we feel afraid and unsure. Courage is the exercising of a muscle during times of challenge and adversity.

The women who wrote stories in this book had all attended an Awesome Women Hub event in Maryland. At the event, we had asked the question: *What does the world need now?* We questioned what it meant to be fearless and there was a hesitation to claim that as true. Something had been opened in each of us during the event and we continued that by gathering in an on-line community for nine months. The women who wrote stories in this book are every day, extraordinary women living their lives to the best of their abilities and making course correction decisions with fearlessness.

All over the planet, we are bringing our voices out of the well-lit caves, in which we shared vulnerable stories in circles of women. Now, we are all ready to go deeper and rise higher. It is a time of awakening for women and men to change. The study guide was created as a tool and resource to encourage you to awaken to more of your inner authority, to reflect on your choices and to tune in to the gifts and wisdom gained from your own experiences. It is divided into sections by each woman's story. There is a short description of the story topic, reflective questions about the story, resources that the author shared and a quote from the author's story.

The book is available on Amazon <https://www.amazon.com/Andrea-Hylen/e/B002C1XZCU/> if you are interested in reading more of the stories. For now, look through the study guide, read the quotes, go to our Instagram page and share with others. <https://www.instagram.com/healmyvoice/>

Individual Reflection

The study guide can be used for individual reflection, meditating and journal writing. If you have a copy of the book, read the story and write about what it stirred in you. A feeling, a memory, a desire? If you do not have the book, read through the questions and reflect on them in general. The questions are for you to discover more of you, in whatever way you choose. Let the quote inspire and awaken something in you that wants to be healed and expressed now.

In reading the stories in this book or reading the quotes, you may want to start a journal and explore your relationships with women: A grandmother, mother, sister, aunt,

cousin, neighbor, teacher, mentor, classmate, friend. Is there something you want to heal? Do you have a different perspective now?

Conscious Book Circles

If you want to start a conscious book circle to read the books, here are some tips and suggestions.

Set a structure

*Is this an ongoing circle or a defined amount of time. (4 weeks, 8 weeks, 12 weeks)

*How often do you meet? Once a week? Once a month?

*Choose a Day and Time

*Pick a location: This can be at different homes or the same home or a quiet, safe space in a library or coffee shop.

*Is this free or is there a cost? Donation? Fee?

*Do you want a co-leader? If you are going to different homes, is the woman who is hosting the circle, the leader or facilitator or time keeper of the group?

Confidentiality:

Ask everyone to give a verbal yes to confidentiality. We each need to feel safe and to know that we can share our voices. Confidentiality creates safety in the group, enhances our ability to be vulnerable with each other and it helps expand the potential for new awareness, healing and exploration. Ask all group members to respect and honor one another and the sacredness of this conscious book circle space.

Open and close the circle with intention:

Light a candle. Close your eyes and breathe together for a few moments. Turn off your cell phones. A short centering or meditation. Read a quote. Ask everyone to take a moment to tune in to their own intention for being in the group today.

Holding Space:

Some women share easily and can speak for a long period of time. Some women need silence and a space to formulate their thoughts and feelings before speaking. Allow space and quiet in between each woman's sharing. You can go around the circle or do it like popcorn style but make sure that every woman says something. Set a timer for a first round of sharing and then go around again. Welcome all feelings. One woman may have

had the worst day of her life. Another woman had the best day. Encourage women to share feelings that are loss and celebration, anger and joy. All feelings have the same importance and value in the circle.

Setting Intentions:

An intention is a starting point and an opportunity to set a conscious desire. An intention may be to listen, to speak up, to decompress, to open to new awareness, to learn something new. It is a way of setting your internal GPS to keep you focused on bringing your heart and mind into a connection.

Establish Guidelines for the Group:

A women's circle with friends can be tricky during a time when one or two members are going through a crisis. Divorce. Cancer. Death of a loved one. Set a boundary around the intention of the group. Set up time to provide additional support for the women who are in crisis outside of the circle. Follow the intention of the book circle and create a separate space for supporting the friend in her crisis. A group can quickly deteriorate and fall apart if you turn this into a crisis management circle.

Set up boundaries:

No fixing or giving advice. Share your own experiences. No formal teaching. This is a space for sharing and reflection. A place for sharing vulnerability and to process experiences that can be turned into wisdom. It is not a space to preach to other people. Create an environment for asking questions, sharing your voice and sharing your process. We are all teachers for each other by being who we are and sharing our own journey. We all have our own inner guidance and it is important to honor and respect that.

Start and end on time

One example is to open the doors and have 15 minutes for going to the bathroom, informal conversation and getting settled into a space to sit. Then, begin. Keep track of the time, bring the conversation to a close and have a closing.

General Questions for Each Story Reflection:

The women who wrote endorsements for the inspiration of this story wrote some ideas of questions to ask when reading every story.

*How is this story like my own?

*What conscious choices will I make now?

*Is there a new perspective I see now at this age?

It is my greatest hope that reading the questions and the quote in each section, will help you to remember your own stories. Your voice is needed in your family, community, business and the world.

Your voice matters.

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To purchase book: <https://www.amazon.com/Fearless-Voices-Stories-Courageous-Women/dp/061560725X/>

Foreword: *Fearless Voices* **By Claudia Carawan**

In this Foreword, Claudia Carawan shares all of the words from her song Fearless. A song written at a time when she felt frustrated and was, "tired of feeling afraid!"

Reflective Questions:

**Where in your life do you see yourself as fearless?*

**Make a list of some of the times you broke the mold of your life. Was it a family pattern or a societal belief? How did it shift your life?*

**How have you used creativity as a tool for personal growth?*

**Make a list of ways creativity healed and transformed you.*

**What is your authentic voice saying now?*

Resources:

Songwriting
Singing
Music

Words from Claudia's song:

Fearless

I was born to live life fully
To let go of regret
To walk the high wire of life without a safety net
To follow something even bigger than my pride
To show up with courage even when I'm trembling inside.

And I will not worry about what others think of me
And I will not be shackled by the chains of conformity
I'll break the mold set in the past
Keep pushing till I'm free at last

I'll follow the path of my heart
And make my life a work of art
Call me fearless. I am fearless!

I'll follow the road to adventure everywhere
I'll let the top down and let the wind tangle up my hair
Hitch my dreams onto the brightest star
On the trapeze of life, I'll just throw my heart right over the bar.

On the other side of fear there lies euphoria
And a better understanding of who you really are
I'll break the mold set in the past
Keep pushing till I'm free at last
I'll follow the path of my heart
And make my life a work of art
Call me fearless.
I am fearless! I am fearless!

I'll push outside the comfort zone
Remembering I'm not alone
I'll follow the path of my heart
And make my life a work of art
Call me fearless. I am fearless!"

~words and music by Claudia Carawan
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ASCAP

Quote:

I was creating what is called, in writing circles, a "list song." In a state of clarity, I listed all the qualities I wished to possess. I tweaked and edited with reckless abandon and soon I was looking at the first draft of a brand new song called, *Fearless*. ~Claudia Carawan

To learn more about Claudia go to: <http://claudiacarawan.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #fearlessong #claudiacarawan #songwriter #listsong
#callmefearless #outsidethecomfortzone #courage #fearless

Acknowledgements

To all the writers and community members, connected with this project, thank you for saying, “Yes!” and becoming the pioneers to a vision of women healing a story in their lives within a community of women. You held the space for something new to happen in a secret Facebook group, on group phone calls, in individual coaching sessions and in workshops. Women individually healing a story with vulnerability, courage, and power with your words and your willingness. I bow down in gratitude to each of you for trusting me when I didn’t have “proof” of what could happen in this sisterhood and for sharing your perspective and new ideas. You held a space for each woman to step into a fuller expression of herself and offer her unique leadership in the group. Believing in each other created an environment for bursts of brilliance.

To 44 women who wrote stories in *Conscious Choices: An Evolutionary Woman’s Guide to Life* and to Lucky Sweeny and Bonnie Kelley, the founders of Evolutionary Women. The experience with you in 2008 was the foundation of the Heal My Voice Projects. Thank you for honoring my vocational arousal and sapiential authority, for encouraging me to take this to the next level and for your core message: *“I will stay awake with you.”*

To Marty Tibbitts who called me to action during a conversation in October 2010, thank you for challenging me to commit to creating an organization with a clear message so I could really impact women’s empowerment and healing trauma, loss and grief. You shined a spotlight on the brilliance I was hiding under a bushel barrel. Thank you for seeing and believing in me.

To Robin Rice, Althea Hughes Wills and Claudia Carawan who collaborated on a project in May 2011. Thank you, Robin, for the vision of the Awesome Women Hub Event. Thank you to Robin and Althea, for gathering us together in the Baltimore area for a weekend of conversations, for creating a fearless video and for including me as a local leader in the California event. Thank you to Rebecca Santoro, Owner of Varuna Aveda Salon Spa in Annapolis, for sponsoring me into the event. Thank you to Claudia for sharing your beautiful, powerful song, *Fearless*, as the inspiration for the foundation of the video. It was the inspiration of the event and Claudia’s song *Fearless* that became the theme for our stories and the first Heal My Voice leadership project: Writing and processing a fearless personal story that would heal something in our lives and the lives of the people who would read our stories.

Thank you to every friend who shuttled me to the airport, bought me a meal, or gave me a place to sleep. You know who you are. So many! Thank you to my board members Kate Foley, Karen Porter and Patty Waldman who believed in me, and the project, from the very beginning. Thank you to Alan Peterson who donated and rewrote a part of his song **At Any Given Moment** to include Heal My Voice, and to Josie Thompson who donated her time and brilliant design ability to create a powerful, beautiful book cover.

There were four friends I want to highlight, and bow down to, in honoring and deep gratitude. Betsy McMahan for the gift of two frequent flier tickets. She answered my request within a few hours when I posted my need on Facebook. Kate Foley and her daughter, Molly who gave me a room in their home, fed me, nurtured, sang and danced with me and listened to every detail I needed to say out loud from early in the morning to late at night whenever I was in Baltimore. I lived with them on and off for two months in 2011. Karen Porter who listened, encouraged, supported me emotionally, physically, spiritually and financially. I would have given up, several times, without you holding the torch high for me to see where I was going next.

And finally to all three of my daughters, Mary, Elizabeth, and Hannah who supported me emotionally, spiritually, mentally and financially during two years of releasing old patterns and healing my own voice. You are my daughters and my soul sisters. And a special thank you to Hannah, age 19, who supported me the way a spouse or life partner would, including paying most of the rent in 2010 with babysitting and pet sitting money and putting your own dreams on hold while I healed my voice and followed my path.

In gratitude and love,
Andrea Hylan

Endorsements

“Fearless Voices: True Stories by Courageous Women” is an exquisitely beautiful book written from the hearts and souls of twenty women who made the decision to fight their fears, find their voices, and heal their souls. Andrea Hylen, the founder of Heal My Voice, encouraged them to move out of the shadows of others—especially those who wielded power over them—and take their places in the world, by telling their stories. In her moving introduction, Andrea writes, “Women are only using a small percentage of their voices,” but, she points out, we have a choice. We can stand tall, breathe deep, and unleash the mighty strength of our voices, or we can wallow in that dark place called fear. By piecing together the fabric of their stories in this lovely, often heartbreaking, book, these twenty courageous women have clearly chosen to turn their backs on fear . . . forever.

~BARBARA HANNAH GRUFFERMAN~
Author, “The Best of Everything After 50”
www.bestofeverythingafter50.com/

These women’s stories are both courageous and humble, powerful and gentle, inspiring and calming; all at once. Reading them, I felt as if I was a cherished and trusted confidante. I am struck by their honesty and uplifted by their strength. I know others will feel just as energized from their words. What a gift.

~FAITH E. WACHTER~
Director of Community Outreach Initiatives
Maryland Public Television
www.mpt.org/community

"If you look up the word fearless in the dictionary, you'll find the words brave and bold as part of the definition. And brave and bold are definitely two words I would use to describe the 20 women who bravely, boldly, courageously, and fearlessly share their stories in the beautiful book Fearless Voices. In this collaboration, not only will you read about everyday women who found the courage to let go of their fear and live the life they wanted to live, you will be inspired to let go of your own fears and pursue whatever matters most to you. Witty, moving, and relatable, I give this book my highest recommendation."

~ SHELLY RACHANOW ~

Author: If Women Ran the World, Sh*t Would Get Done
<http://www.ifwomenrantheworld.com/>

As Andrea points out so concisely in her foreword – so many women are afraid to be strong and share their true selves. At Marian House, we too know the power of nurturing women through providing love within community. As a believer in the power of all women to change the world, I am thankful that Andrea helped these amazing women/authors through their journeys of storytelling.. the result is inspirational and illuminating.

~KATIE ALLSTON~

Executive Director
Marian House, Inc.

<http://www.marianhouse.org/>

"This book will make you think, it will make you feel and it will make you better. By reading how these women stepped into their courage, found their voices and made positive changes, you'll find the courage to do the same."

~POLLY CAMPBELL~

Author of: Imperfect Spirituality: Extraordinary enlightenment for ordinary people
<http://www.imperfectspirituality.com>

"As I read the introduction, the lyrics, "I'm every woman, it's all in me" from the popular song by Chaka Khan and Whitney Houston came to mind. Fearless Voices is a powerful collection of stories about and for every woman. As I read the stories, I cried; I laughed; I smiled; and I sighed but most importantly, I felt connected to my sisters/myself and I felt courageous.

If there is a voice deep within you that screams for you to step into the spotlight but instead you hide in the shadows, lurk in the background and stay just under the radar; you MUST read this book. If you're on a path but don't always feel confident that it's the right one for you, you MUST read this book. If you are a woman who has ever felt scared or been wounded in any way, you MUST read this book. If you are every woman you MUST read this book. Fearless Voices is an extraordinary Book of Significance."

~LAVONNE SUMLER~
Voice of Significance, LLC
www.VoiceOfSignificance.com

So many times in today's world, our voices are used to hurt, to punish...to divide. Thank you for putting together a collection that actually seeks to unite us each...with our own voices and with others, searching, too, for their greatest good.

~JENNIE BODEN
Executive Director
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault(MCASA)
<http://www.mcasa.org/>

"Andrea Hylen is the voice and gift women have needed, so that they too could hear their unique call, to grow in supportive community. Her compassion and altruism is a gift to all she touches with her wisdom, experience, and unconditionalism. Having overcome devastation, Andrea was motivated through her own loss to lead others in supportive community~ her Spirit is an inspiration for all humanity."

~LISA ZIMMER~
Intuitive Counseling/Unlimited Realities Radio Show
<http://www.lisamzimmer.com/>

"Beautifully written, this collection of writings reminds me of how resilient and strong women are."

~AUDREY BERGIN, MA~
Manager
Domestic Violence (DOVE) Program
Northwest Hospital
Randallstown, Maryland

Introduction by Andrea Hylan

This is the introduction from the book, Fearless Voices: True Stories by Courageous Women. It is an overview of the project and a reflection on the power of women healing in community.

Reflective Questions:

*What are you ready to heal that will enable you to speak up and use more of your voice?

*List all of the communities where you can share your voice and speak what you feel, think and want. If your list is blank, do some research and find an on-line or in person community to join. Keep trying different groups until you find a place that feels right for you.

*What does empowerment mean to you?

*Reflect on your answers and write down feelings and awareness about how you use your voice.

Resources:

Writing
Community

Quotes:

In the Heal My Voice writing programs, and letter writing projects, we believe healing an old story leads women to a richer expression of their unique gifts and leadership and gives them more access to the full expression of their voice.

When a woman is nurtured in community and given a space to speak about what she feels, thinks and wants, she heals her voice and begins to speak from a place of wisdom. She learns to listen to her inner guidance. She asks for support when she needs it. She taps into her vulnerability and uses it as power. She discovers her innate wisdom.

Things are rapidly changing in the world. We are in a time of breakdown. The old structures are crumbling. And we have the chance to rebuild, rethink, and release things that no longer work. Women standing together and standing side by side with

men is what is needed. We need the full expression of who we are. Connected to our hearts. Listening to and acting from inspiration. Joining together to lift humanity. We can't heal the planet when we ourselves are emotionally and spiritually wounded.

The mission is to empower a tribe of women who heal a story in their lives, reconnect with their inner authority, and discover the next steps in leadership. Women in community expressing vulnerability, supporting each other, encouraging, laughing, connecting, collaborating and celebrating life. ~Andrea Hylan, Founder of Heal My Voice

For more information on Heal My Voice, go to: <http://healmyvoice.org/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #community #andreahtylen #awomansvoice #healing #writing
#courage #fearless

Part I:

I Am Listening

If she got really quiet and listened,
new parts of her wanted to speak.

~SARK, Succulent Wild Woman

Story One: My Heroine's Journey: A Spiritual Awakening **By Christel Libiot**

This story is about the author's awakening to a spiritual journey to move to the United States from France and the things she learned while following her inner guidance.

*What has been your experience of listening to your inner voice?

*Reflect on an experience when you asked the question, "Is this the Divine plan?"

*What have been some of the high and low points of your own Heroine's (or Hero's) Journey?

*Make a list of self-love practices and commit to doing one of them today.

Resources:

Yoga

Chanting

Meditation

Quote:

"While the special connection to God I had in 1992 and 1993 allowed me to follow my destiny and put me on a spiritual path, I now know that the significance of it was to get to know LOVE. Not romantic love, not even love towards God, but love for me."

~Christel Libiot

To learn more about Christel, go to: <http://bodysoulwisdom.abmp.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #courage #chanting #yoga #messagesfromSpirit
#innervoice #meditation #Nepal #guidedbyspirit #fearless #christellibiot #WhiteCloud
#heroinesjourney

Story Two: Retrieving Pieces of my Soul

By Rebecca Matias

This story is about a breathwork session experienced by the author.

*Have you ever been told that you are too much or that you should be different than who you are? Bigger? Smaller? How did that feel? Have you been able to reclaim that part of yourself and break free from another person's limited view of who you are?

*Let's explore a few questions: Do you trust yourself? Do you fear being your full self? Are you limiting yourself? Take some time to write down thoughts and feelings connected to the questions.

*Rebecca described the powerful feeling of being fully supported by another person. Have you ever experienced someone being there for you fully, in a way that let you be messy with tears, anger, or intense feelings? How did that feel?

*Who would you become if you were held with total focus and permission to be who you are?

Resources:

Breathwork
Heal Your Body by Louise Hay
Author Caroline Myss

Quote:

"It is ok to be your huge self. The world needs you to be that person." She assures me that I am not too much. It is safe to expand into the fullness of who I am. It is important to the world that I be that authentic expression. It is important to trust myself. ~Rebecca Matias

To learn more about Rebecca, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/RebeccaMatiasFan/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #courage #trust #breathwork #iamwhoiam
#healyourbody #abandonment #carolinemyss #louisehay #adoption #soulretrieval
#iamwhole #fearless #femininefortune #rebeccamatias

Story Three: *The Courage to Commit* **By Kathryn Yarborough**

This story is an exploration of the courage it takes to really commit to a business or a goal. The author shares her personal experience.

*Is there something that you have vowed to commit to and you are avoiding it? What is it? Why are you avoiding it?

*What are some of the practices you *set in place*, so you can succeed when you make a commitment?

*What feelings come up for you when you make a commitment?

*Are you strongest in completing goals in the beginning, middle or end of a project? Pick the one where you are the weakest. What could you do to support yourself in being successful and finding your courage?

Resources:

Journaling Exercises

Quote:

When we really commit to doing something like achieving a goal, succeeding in a business, or writing a story for a book, in an instant, an inner shift happens that transforms our lives. It's as if we've made a promise or a vow to ourselves and to the Universe. In that moment, everything in the Universe aligns with us in full support of the manifestation we have committed to. ~Kathryn Yarborough

To learn more about Kathryn, go to: <http://flowingwithchange.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #flowingwithchange #commitment #courage
#ihaveachoice #trusttheuniverse #kathrynyarborough #heartbasedentrepreneurs
#manifestingabundance

Story Four: Mourning Melissa

By Sharon Shreve

This story is about a mother grieving the loss of her daughter, who was murdered, and discovering that she had a choice to honor her daughter's life, accept the reality and live life fully.

*Have you experienced the loss of a close friend or family member? How has that loss impacted your life?

*What do you do to support yourself when a "riveting wave of grief" is about to strike?

*Do you find yourself making different choices on how to live because of the loss of loved one?

Resource:

The Priestess Process

Quotes:

Like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, Spirit gave me the strength needed to rise from my trenches of fear and despair. I began viewing life from a loftier plane. I now have a deeper understanding of human suffering and a heightened sense of compassion for all life forms. I treat both myself and others with more patience, love and kindness. My experience in terror has been humbling; one which has added dimension to my life. I was gifted insight into human suffering, enabling me to better serve humankind, and for this I am in all ways grateful. ~Sharon Shreve.

Through the experience of monumental grief, I was brought to a startling realization: I have a choice. I could writhe in bed forever, anesthetize myself with tranquilizers, or get up and somehow learn to live a life without Melissa. ~Sharon Shreve

To learn more about Sharon, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/illuminedways/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #grief #minister #lossofachild #murder #ihaveachoice
#thepriestessprocess #sharonshreve #guidedbyspirit #courage #fearless

Story Five: *Witness*

By Tammy Vitale

Angels can play rough when we get caught in the heavy crosswinds of their wings. They work within great wheels and circles turning light to dark and back again. ~Judith Roche

This story is about remembering that dark and light are just different spaces in the same cycle and recognizing that wounds and hurt are not always what they seem. The author shares experiences of trusting that when you are willing to break open the darkness, you can create cracks for the light to shine through.

*Reflect on a time when you found yourself in a dark period, wondering how you got there.

*What did you learn about yourself during that period? What self-care practices did you have?

*Focus on what is happening in your life now: What do you want? What does a day of that look like?

Resources:

Journal

Connect with community-based organizations

Art

Quotes:

Each time I reflected on what was happening in my life, I took a step toward taking responsibility for that life, and it made me strong enough to take another step. I realized I could reach out to others and find generosity I had not expected. I discovered that sometimes the first step must be taken more than once, that stories can be rewritten every day or hour or minute. ~Tammy Vitale

To learn more about Tammy, go to: <http://tammyvitale.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #courage #fearless #domesticabuse #addiction
#communityorganizer #whatdoiwant #openyoureyes #tammyvitale
#seewhatyouarebecoming

Part II:

I Am Releasing

Yesterday is gone.
Tomorrow has not yet come.
We have only today.
Let us begin.
~Mother Teresa

Story Six: *Butterfly Winds*

By Ellen Koronet

This story is about the author gradually closing the doors on her childhood and navigating into a new way of seeing and being in the world through the experience of losing her father and her dear cousin, Sylvia.

How has your sense of “Knowing” changed over the years? Has it increased or decreased in “volume?” Does it show up differently?

Can you think of a moment in time where you could not possibly deny your own sense of exactly what to do next? Or that all is exactly as it should be? Did you allow it or resist it? What was the result?

How are you present with friends or loved ones? Do you ever lean in and just listen, even without exchanging words? What does it take to be that present? How does it feel? [Full disclosure from the Author - I have learned and unlearned this skill/talent many times!]

To replicate my experience of seeing myself in my cousin’s eyes: An exercise with a partner/friend/peer... Face to face, hold hands, look into one eye first, then the other. Take a breath. Close eyes while one of you tells a three-sentence story. Open eyes. Share your reactions. [In my experience, what I saw/felt was parts of myself - I needed to hear back from my cousin to realize that this was what I was hearing].

Resources:

Creativity Centers

Creativity Cards

Quotes:

My new sense of fearlessness has something to do with butterflies. It’s that quiet stillness that enters adventure with you, especially when the “adventure” is disguised as common life events. It’s that Knowing that this is a Good way to go now. Just knowing and going. ~Ellen Koronet

Updated Bio:

Since the first publication of Fearless Voices, Ellen Koronet has written two more Heal My Voice entries, published the Inner Muse & Mentor creativity system, lost her other delightful parent, and lost one kidney. The kidney cancer snuck up in 2016. Since then, Ellen has been wholeheartedly designing quizzes and surveys that connect the brilliance of brands to ideal customers; writing books and articles; and speaking at Creativity Conferences and Leadership Summits. Ellen still lives in Maryland with two cats, a golden retriever, her awesome husband, and one of her two grown children. You can still reach her at ellenkoronet@LNKcreative.com.

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #butterflywinds #ellenkoronet #dreams #creativitycenters #grief #spiritalanimals #courage #fearless #innermuseandmentor

Story Seven: *Shouting with My Mouth Closed* **By Debra Berney**

This story is the author's experience of challenging herself by entering a body-building figure competition at the age of 50, to get into the best possible physical shape and show herself that she could do it.

*Do you have a dream or a goal that would challenge or stretch you?

*What is one step you can take towards that goal?

*Would this dream or goal take you out of your comfort zone?

*What kind of support do you need to accomplish this goal?

Resource:

Fitness programs

Quote:

I'd like to say that I made the decision to move forward and never looked back. But, that would be a lie. Twice in the year and a half before the competition, I said to myself: "What am I thinking? I can't do this! What are people going to think?" In truth, I almost quit. Fortunately, I had support from my friend and personal trainer, Tony, who convinced me that I'd never know if I could or couldn't unless I gave it a try. Funny, this is what I tell my clients. ~Debra Berney

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #figurecompetition #debraberney #fitness
#inspirationover50 #communityhealth #wellness #courage #fearless

Story Eight: *Bodacious Again: One Woman's Journey from Wild to Mild and Back Again*

By Lisa Stearns

This story is about a wife and mother who forgot that she was brave until an experience of going on a hiking trip expanded her boundaries and helped her remember who she really is: a bold, bodacious woman.

*Have you ever had something end and then asked, who am I, now that I am not a ...?
(homeschool mom, business owner, wife)

*Another question is, what possible purpose can I serve?

*Is there something you want to do in your life that is both exciting and scary?

*What is one step that will get you closer to that goal?

Resources:

Venture Scouts
Toastmasters Club

Quotes:

You see, this could have been a tale of physical courage and accomplishment, one woman against the wilderness, and lifelong relationships, forged from a powerful, common experience. Instead, it is an everyday story about me, a wife and mother, who forgot she was brave, forgot that she could stand on her own and be decisive. It is a tale of expanding boundaries and self-realization. Through this journey, I learned that I am still a bold, bodacious woman, with enormous gifts to share. ~Lisa Stearns

To learn more about Lisa, go to: <http://www.lisastearns.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #iambrave #lisastearns #venturescouts #toastmasters
#findingmyvoice #courage #fearless #boldbodaciouswoman #homeschooling

Story Nine: *Walking on Eggshells* **By Sherry Dmytrewycz**

This story is about the author's journey with her mother who had dementia. The experience of going to court to protect her, financially and physically, and the grief of letting go of their relationship.

*Was there anything your parents said that made you fearful of displeasing them? What effect has this had on your relationship with them and others?

*Do you need to be heard or acknowledged to find the power to take needed action or do you follow your heart?

*Have you ever struggled to find the gifts in your life challenges?

*Are you aware of some of the signs of dementia?

*What are your thoughts now on the systems in place to care for the elderly?

Resources:

Energy healing
Metaphysics
Spirituality

Quotes:

"I will no longer hold on to any relationships in which I have to "win" the love, honor, or appreciation of another. I will be accepted for who I am, or I will move on." ~Sherry Dmytrewycz

"Fear did not stop me from following my heart." ~Sherry Dmytrewycz

"An opinion is not something to be feared. It is just a reflection of who **they** are and where **they** are mentally and emotionally." ~Sherry Dmytrewycz

To learn more about Sherry, go to: <http://www.healinggateway.com>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #sherrydmytrewych #dementia #motherdaughter
#healing #courtguardian #courage #fearless #grief #healinggateway

Story Ten: *What Gift Do You Bring?* **By Elizabeth St. Germain (Liz Draman)**

This story is about the author awakening to the truth of love. The story is narrated by the four voices of herSelf.

*Is your inner voice asking you to take a closer look at something?

*Have you ever consciously chosen unconsciousness, in order to survive? How did that serve you?

*Is there some area of your life where you are a perfectionist? How does that support you? How does it limit you?

Resources:

Self-help books
Spiritual programs
Violet flame decrees

Quotes:

Too often we look to external sources to fill the emptiness within. Nothing external can quench our inner longing for Love. Only the Love that we are never separate from will fill the void. ~Elizabeth St. Germain, Personal Journal Entry - July 2, 2015

You can live your life by Choice rather than need, through Love rather than fear.
Elizabeth St. Germain, Personal Journal Entry, November 11, 2006

The Guest House by Rumi

This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,

Who violently sweep your house
Empty of its furniture,
Still, treat each guest honorably,
He may be clearing you out
For some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond.

To learn more about Elizabeth, go to: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/elizabethstgermain/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #elizabethstgermain #iamlivinginlove
#whatgift doyoubring #love #awakening #courage #fearless #divorce #innervoice
#thoughtsofsuicide #rumi #theguesthouse #violetflame

Part III:

I Am Supported

Each friend represents a world in us,
a world not born until they arrive,
and it is only by this meeting
that a new world is born.

~Anais Nin

Story Eleven: *Champion Mom*

By Karen A. Porter

This story is about a mother's journey of being a champion for her sons, who were adopted in Russia and brought to the United States. During the writing of this story, the author became aware of how it is time to also be a champion for herself.

*Are you a champion for other people? How about for yourself?

*Have you hidden parts of who you really are from family and friends? Why?

*How would your life change, if you showed up as the true you, all the time?

*What would it take to change?

Resources:

Tibetan Singing Bowls
Knitting

Quotes:

I cannot count how many times I have been told how lucky Anton and Sasha are to have us as parents and I always reply that we are lucky to have them as our sons. Now I know that the greatest gift for myself is just unfolding. I know that fearless, warrior mothering readied me to mother myself. ~Karen A. Porter

To learn more about Karen go to: <http://www.mamaporters.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #adoption #karenporter #russianadoption #courage
#fearless #champion #homeschooling #selflove #healing #mamaporters

Story Twelve: *Being a Positive Advocate ~ A Story of Choice* **By Beth Bracaglia**

This story is about the struggles and gifts of being bipolar, shared from the personal experience of the author.

*Do you know someone with mental illness? Have you experienced this yourself?

*Have you formed an opinion based on reading or watching stories about mental illness? What is the opinion you have formed?

*Make a list of some of your personal struggles from the past and in the present.

*How do you tune into positivity?

*What inspires you?

Resources:

Group Counseling

One on one counseling

Self-help books

Gratitude Journal

Beth Bracaglia's Simply Inspired Page on Facebook

Quote:

I began speaking to small groups about living positively with a mental illness, explaining to others who were facing their own difficulties that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. By making difficult choices and being courageous, I am proof that life can get easier over time. ~Beth Bracaglia

To learn more about Beth go to: <http://www.simplyorganizedtoday.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #thisismybrave #bethbracaglia #bipolar #counseling
#gratitudejournal #simplyorganized #courage #fearless #simplyinspired #positivity

Story Thirteen: *Running to Heal* **By Karen Ribeiro**

This story is about how the author filled her life with busyness to avoid feelings of the death of her brother until she made a change.

*Women know how to care deeply: Is this a compliment or a curse?

*What are the creativity practices you have to release and process feelings? Do you journal?

*What are some unresolved feelings you have with a friend or family member? Start by writing down your feelings.

*Is there something for you to say directly to a loved one or is writing down your feelings all that is needed at this time? What would you serve you the best, in your healing?

*Explore the idea of common ground to strengthen connection with the people in your lives.

Resources:

Al-Anon

Journal writing

Yoga

Thirsty: Journaling to Survive, Thrive and Feel Alive by Karen Ribeiro

Quote:

Right before the birth of my son, my mother was diagnosed with cancer. I dug deep and set out to reconcile our differences in the time she had left. I wanted direction, something of a road map to healing. We simply spent time together. I helped her pull her hair out, gently, lovingly. We didn't talk things out, but we did our best through the ebbs and flows. ~Karen Ribeiro

To learn more about Karen, go to: <http://innerfortune.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #runningtoheal #karenribeiro #innerfortune #courage
#fearless #thirstybook #grief #journalwriting #processfeelings

Story Fourteen: *Cave Dweller* **By Elizabeth Dellow**

This story is about the author discovering and uncovering her essence and essential self after the death of her father and her sister's suicide.

*Do you relate to being a "Cave Dweller"? What does that look like in your life?

*Is it time for you to show up in a new way in your life?

*Is there something missing in your life? What is it?

*What is one step you can take to move closer to a new perspective and an awakening?

*Is there something you are holding on to from your past? What needs to die or be released for you to step into more of your dreams?

Resources:

Inspiration Community
Poetry
Integrative Breathwork
Beth's DIY Workshop

Quote:

I have been opened and dug out. Not of my own doing, but by my own allowing. What has been stripped away and what is being stripped away is the unconscious shell that has covered the seed of my being. From the cave, has emerged the fully, flowered, revealed self that yearns for the light and to be the light that only love reveals. I am all of this and so is everything else. And the process continues. ~Elizabeth Dellow

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #bethsdiyworkshop #elizabethdellow #cavedweller
#awakening #inspirationcommunity #grief #suicideofsister #deathoffather #courage
#fearless #integrativebreathwork

Story Fifteen: *And With that Simple Action, I Began to Find My Way...* **By Andrea Hylan**

This story is about the vulnerability and feelings of failure when the author received an eviction letter. In this story, the power of community, the experience of soul connection and how we can learn from adversity is demonstrated.

*Is there something that is falling apart in your life right now? Or something that fell apart in the past?

*What were the feelings? Did you feel like a failure? What are your feelings about that experience now?

*Who can you ask for support?

*Are you aware of messages from Spirit? What are some of the messages you have received recently?

*What is one simple action step that you can take?

Resources:

Grandmother Speaks
Community and a Sisterhood

Quotes:

And in that moment, I knew that was the through line. The through line is the bridge that links two ideas together, like illness to health, which connects you to new ideas and solutions. It connects you to the turning point where infinite possibilities can emerge. That was the message from my soul. Write about it publicly and be vulnerable. Allow yourself to be seen. Right now. ~Andrea Hylan

You are stronger and wiser than you know and this “thing” that is happening right now has a gift inside. Listen for the inner guidance on what to do next. And with that simple action, you will begin to find your way. ~Andrea Hylan

To learn more about Andrea, go to: <http://www.andreahylen.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #community #spiritmessages #askforsupport
#andreahylen #courage #fearless #sisterhood #grandmotherspeaks #simpleaction
#innerguidance

Part IV:

I Am Healed

Painful as it may be,
a significant emotional event can be the catalyst
for choosing a direction that serves us
- and those around us -
more effectively.
Look for the learning.
~Louisa May Alcott

Story Sixteen: *The Journey to Mother...and Back* **By Deb Kabin**

This story is about the rising of the Divine Feminine and the deep listening for each of us. She needs us to be Her voice.

*Are you in touch with the Divine Feminine? What action do you feel the Divine Feminine needs now?

*How do we come into balance with the Divine Feminine and Masculine?

*Do you feel safe in the world? What would it take for you to feel safe?

*What do you see is the journey of The Great Mother now? What can we do to love her more?

Resources:

Goddess Runes
Women's Gatherings
Sister's Sanctuary Gatherings for Women

Quotes:

Oh soul,
you worry too much.
You have seen your own strength.
You have seen your own beauty.
You have seen your golden wings.
Of anything less,
Why do you worry?
You are in truth
the soul, of the soul, of the soul."
~Rumi

My mother... It wasn't until I was a little older that I realized that she didn't share her voice out in the world. And that she didn't feel that she had a voice in the world. I

wonder now, if she had a sacred circle of women to mirror her, and her beautiful, feminine gifts - and if they had been given the great value that they deserved would she have felt empowered? Could she have found her voice? ~Deb Kabin

To learn more about Deb, go to:

<http://www.earthmotherholisticevents.com/contact.html>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #thegreatmother #debkabin #thedivinefeminine #
#courage #fearless #birthand rebirth #thegoddessrune #sisterssanctuary #empowerment

Story Seventeen: *Finding My Voice* **By Ann Quasman**

This story is about the author's voice and her fear of public speaking. In this story, the author shares her experience of being raped, the healing and learning to use her voice.

*Do you have a fear of using your voice? How do you feel about using your voice to speak publicly?

*Have you ever taken a public speaking course? What did you learn about yourself in the course?

*Do you know someone who has been sexually assaulted? Have you been sexually assaulted? Do you have places to have conversations about sexual assault? What do you want to talk about?

*Expand on your experiences of listening or speaking by sharing your experiences with someone or writing in a journal.

Resources:

Dale Carnegie
Public Speaking
Crisis center
Therapist
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Radio Show

Quotes:

What was I fearful of? I've come to learn, it was My Voice. Not the sound of my voice with its southern drawl, but the using of my voice; as a tool, as a way to ask for what I want, to inquire, to make comments, to offer ideas, to participate with others, to take risks, to express who I am. ~Ann Quasman

I have to admit, it hasn't always been easy to talk about it since sexual assault is something most people, even your best girlfriends, don't really want to discuss. There's an uncomfortable silence around rape, and it brings up lots of "stuff" for many people. I think that's understandable when you think about the statistics:

*Nearly 1 in 5 women has been raped at some time in her life.

*On average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States every year. -NISVS, 2010

~Ann Quasman

To learn more about Ann, go to: <http://womantalklive.com/>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #annquasman #womantalklive #courage #fearless
#sexualassault #findingmyvoice #dalecarnegie #publicspeaking

Story Eighteen: *Sun Song*

By Laurissa Heller

This story is about the author's experience of walking in faith and reconnecting to her body, her voice and her life. The author shares an experience of being sexually assaulted.

*Do you ever ask yourself this question: Why is life so hard?

*Do you know anyone who has been sexually assaulted? How did the person who was assaulted use their voice to tell someone? What happened?

*What is your connection to your body? What practices do you use to stay connected to your body, emotions and feelings?

*Is there something that you are hiding? What do you think would happen, if you shared it with someone? What support do you need?

Resources:

Yoga
Astrology
Meditation

Quote:

There is one piece of knowing within that keeps me moving forward. This knowing reminds me that it is a role, a learning experience, an illusion, one stroke in a much larger painting...so I must trust the process. It is called faith. You know the word "faith." We throw it around like a hot potato. Who truly wants to walk the path of faith? We take the faith path only when there is a tsunami on one side, and a swamp filled with snakes on the other. When there aren't any other options ~Laurissa Heller

To learn more about Laurissa, go to: <https://www.laurissaheller.com/about-laurissa>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #laurissaheller #courage #fearless #sexualassault #yoga #meditation #astrology #faith

Story Nineteen: My Voice

By Jamie Dee Schiffer

This story is about the author's reflection about the voices of other people in her life and finding that her own voice is the only one she should ever heed.

*Did you question things as a kid? How were your questions received and answered?

*Do you question who you are? Who are you now?

*What are some of the challenges you have experienced in your life? What are some of the gifts you discovered?

*Have you been on a path of personal growth? Who are your favorite teachers?

*How often do you spend time processing your thoughts and feelings and experiences? Do you process alone? Do you process with others? What do you need now?

Resources:

Dalai Lama
Mother Teresa
Ghandi
Jesus

Quote:

If my true, life lesson is to trust my own inner voice, to tune in to all that connects me to the universe and others, then I need to trust my feelings, to find that still quiet space and listen to what my heart has to say. ~Jamie Dee Schiffer

To learn more about Jamie, go to: <https://www.a-passionate-life.com/jamiedee>

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #i #jamiedeeschiffer #courage #fearless #myvoice
*spiritualteachers #listentoyourheart #spiritual teachers

Story Twenty: *Addiction* **By Cathy Rinaldi**

This story is about sex addiction, recovery, marriage and the author's journey back to herself to find her own true voice.

*When were you first introduced to your sexuality?

*Make a list of significant events in your life around your sexuality.

*Which events supported you and which events were confusing?

*Is there something that you want to heal? What is the first step towards that healing?

Resources:

Workshops
Therapy

Quote:

Now that shame no longer clouds my feelings, there is no need for secrets. Keeping the secrets kept me in a prison of my own making. I have allowed my journey, to the depths of my inner hell, teach me the truth about who I am. I have found pieces of myself that I never knew existed. Now my life is a constant quest to know myself deeper and unpeel the layers to more self-discovery. ~Cathy Rinaldi

#healmyvoice #fearlessvoices #courage #fearless #sexaddiction #sexualabuse #sexuality
#mormonchurch #shame #healing #vulnerability

To purchase the book go to Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Fearless-Voices-Stories-Courageous-Women/dp/061560725X/>