

«It's the Purpose, Dear!»

**Generation Purpose
Podcast**
by **Steve Weisshaupt**
with Nadja Schnetzler
and Laurent Burst



It's the Purpose, Dear!

Transcript - Episode 2 - Courage

Steve: [00:00:00] Hey, It's Steve. And welcome to «It's the Purpose, Dear!» If you're new here, I would highly recommend starting from the intro episode. If you're like me and can be bothered, here's what you should know. Every episode I share with you, my friends' Laurent and Nadia's passion and knowledge about purpose. They've worked with thousands of people and hundreds of teams to make purpose work in the work environment and in the lives of individuals. Now that you all caught up, let's start. - Once upon a time an ancient form of storytelling called «The Hero's Journey» was born. Since then, it has been used many times as a model for fiction writing. Such tales go as follows: A hero receives a call to adventure which prompts them to go on a journey paved with obstacles before coming back to their world, enriched and matured. Notorious example is Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz. She starts her journey in a place of boredom, wishing to find a place where she'll be out of trouble. During a quest her goal is to go back home, and she will successfully do so after overcoming challenges. I feel that the storytelling structure would work in real life because I do see some parallels. Facing scary challenges to grow and find confidence. Does that sound familiar. So my question is: How do heroes overcome obstacles? Dwight, is one in his book «The Selling Writer», argues that it is because of bravery. But there's a difference between brave and courageous. [00:01:42] [102.3]

Laurent: [00:01:43] Courageous comes from the word «coeur» - French - or from «cor» like Latin... so... from the heart. And brave comes from the Latin word «barbarous», like really violent and toxic and all that stuff. And courageous comes from the inside. It's like, what do you want? What you need, what you stand up for? And brave comes more from the outside. Like what you have to do, things you don't really want to do, but you think to have to prove a point or something. So I would say if something is courageous: do it. No matter what doubts, whatever stands in front of you, do it. Because being courageous means that you stand up for what you

believe, what really matters to you, to you individually or your team. And if something is brave: don't do it. Because it has nothing to do with you. It doesn't come from within you. It's to prove a point. It's to impress somebody, or if it's a duty to do something. [00:02:43][60.4]

Steve: [00:02:44] Bravery is an act of confidence. Operating in a place where fear does not exist. Instead, courage is a conscious choice, motivated by what is true to you, no matter what stands in front of you. But knowing we can face obstacles can pull us back, fearing what's coming ahead. So to exercise courage, we need to face our fears. [00:03:07][23.3]

Laurent: [00:03:07] Whenever we talk about courage, it's also about overcoming insecurity and fear and also managing or dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity. [00:03:18][10.2]

Steve: [00:03:19] When a hero rebels against the system, she or he usually faces dramatic consequences. For example, I think about Katniss Everdeen in «The Hunger Games». Her courage to fight against the oppression of the capital drove her to deal with a lot of fierce. But unlike movies, being courageous at work, for example, does not need to be a rampage against the establishment. You will not face such dramatic consequences. Because being courageous, my dears, lies also in very simple actions. [00:03:49][30.4]

Nadja: [00:03:50] I think that in the environments that I often encounter with teams, even small things - where I think like «this is a no brainer», this is no biggie - for teams it's like «Oh, I can't do this, someone will be against it and someone will say 'no', and I will get a bad mark», you know, like in school. It's interesting also that sometimes things can be courageous, that people don't really think they are. People always have this image in mind that courageous needs to be something really significant or, you know, rebuilding the department or something really big. But I think the most courageous thing for a team, for instance, can be to just have fun at what they do, to be joyful in what they do, to enjoy time together, and to also talk about that. Because in many environments it's like «we're here for work, this shouldn't be fun.» It's like «you get money for that» and if you can show that «No, it's absolutely important to have fun» and that also the quality of what you do will increase because you have fun. Sometimes that takes more courage than something else. [00:05:03][73.0]

Steve: [00:05:04] Yes, it can be as simple as having fun. But the hard thing there is to decide to commit to it. That everybody commits to it. [00:05:13][9.1]

Nadja: [00:05:13] It's really about having a common understanding of what you want and then to follow through with that. And that takes also courage. Because you will always have someone who says «Oh, this is not important» or «politics is just something we need in the company. You know, it's part of the DNA». And if you go against that stream and say like «I'm not interested in that». That also takes courage. [00:05:37][24.1]

Steve: [00:05:38] We saw in the last episode, overcoming fear and welcoming change it's about knowing that no matter what your purpose is your lodestar and it will bring you clarity. [00:05:49][10.6]

Laurent: [00:05:49] I think what's very helpful in being courageous is: if you have clarity about what you stand for or what we stand for as a team. So that's exactly why we develop team purposes, individual purposes, my individual purpose at work. So when something is formulated and you have absolute clarity what you really want individually or what you want here at this place in this team, or what you as a team want, then it's easier to stand up for it because if you would not be courageous, it would mean that you are not yourself, that you don't stand up for what you believe in, for what matters to you. So it's very helpful to develop these purposes, to have clarity about them. [00:06:36][46.5]

Steve: [00:06:36] Despite the odds our heroes have in common to follow a purpose that ignited their courage. Luke Skywalker, for example, is to bring the downfall of the empire. But you don't need to go such length. It can be a constructive and inspiring action. [00:06:51][14.3]

Nadja: [00:06:52] I think that we need more of that. More people who can imagine something new and just try it out and and prove to the others «Look, there's another way, we can do things» or «There is another way we can approach this». And that certainly takes courage as well. [00:07:07][15.9]

Steve: [00:07:14] In every story following The Hero's Journey narrative there's always that moment when a hero encounters a mentor. This mentor figure will help them cross the threshold to start that transformative adventure. Back in real life we don't always get to find a mentor that helps us harvest the courage we need to take action. We can, however, make sure that we and everybody we are working with follow the same purpose. [00:07:38][23.5]

Laurent: [00:07:38] Companies say «We want to be innovative», «We want to be the pioneers». That means that they need courageous

people and courageous teams. They need to empower them so they stand up for what they believe, what they want. And it means that whatever you want as a pioneer: there will be problems. So you need to be confident to go forward no matter what's coming, because you're true to the purpose and your belief. It comes just to my mind that there is a connection maybe between being courageous and being in a safer space. Because courageous always means that you have to, you know, you have to overcome something, that it really takes something to do a step. But how wonderful would it be if you're in an environment where it doesn't take courage to speak up, to raise your voice, to have an idea and so on. So that's what we try to establish in a team. to have a safe space where they know that they can come up with ideas, with raw ideas, unfinished thoughts, unfinished concepts, and they're not killed for it, but supported. People help to think it forward.
[00:08:56][77.3]

Steve: [00:08:56] We've seen that courage isn't about how big the acts you do are, but how meaningful they are. And to do so in alignment with a purpose, with a creative safe space in which you can act with confidence because you are not constrained to fear. Courage is played out when you are not sure things will work out, but you will do it anyway. You will try things out even though this means failing. And there arises the fine line between courage and confidence. [00:09:29][32.8]

Laurent: [00:09:30] For me, one aspect of confidence is to ignore doubts, to ignore critics, to ignore anything negative, because you just know it doesn't help. So it's a decision to be confident. It's a decision to be courageous. And you know what you want and you decide like you ignore all the problems or all the naysayers because that doesn't help you to do what you're convinced of.
[00:09:57][26.1]

Nadja: [00:09:57] I think confidence, at least if I think about the term and term {«Selbstvertrauen»}, it has something to do with trusting yourself. That - no matter what happens - you can trust yourself. And that you can lean in or go into this new thing and - no matter what happens - you will be able, you'll be fine. And you can have confidence also as a team but it doesn't mean that you know what will happen. I think that is mostly never true in this world. We never know what will happen because the world has become so complex. So I think it's good to be confident, but not going into new things with this attitude of «it will work» but with the attitude «Let's find out what happens», «Let's be courageous to find out what happens» and then deal with that and incorporate that and do the next step. I think there is a lot of overconfidence in companies like «we know how it goes and this will work». But no, let's find out if what we think will work will

work or if we need to tweak it and go in a new direction. That is more a spirit of experimentation. And experimentation is for me the epitome of courage. It's like you need to... if you want to experiment, you need to be curious and courageous and risk something, you know. [00:11:19][82.4]

Steve: [00:11:20] I heard somewhere once someone saying that «in the cave you fear to enter lies the treasure you seek». So how do you enter the cave you fear? [00:11:28][8.2]

Laurent: [00:11:29] Maybe the famous claim «just do it» is actually about being courageous. Like just do what you think is the right thing to do right now. Just do it. But I really like when Nadja said that courageous can also be like «do small steps, don't do the big one». I think if you talk about confidence and courage, it's very much about training these muscles. So if a team or you yourself have the awareness that this is important, just try to do that everyday all the time. Try to be a bit out of your comfort zone. Do something you hesitate, do something you're shy about. Just do it. And also when you notice that others should be / want to be courageous and they don't dare support them. Also, if you're not a fan of the idea, also if you don't agree, if you don't understand, but just training the muscles in a team is so, so helpful because it gives the whole atmosphere, the tone, the how you talk with each other. [00:12:27][58.9]

Nadja: [00:12:28] I had a meeting last week where someone said to all the suggestions that I brought for a workshop that was happening 10 minutes later - so there was no way to change something anyway - but everything that I presented as «this is what we're going to do now» was like «but this might not work». And I was like «How is that helpful?» Like «we will only know if we did it». And yes, you could say that about anything. You can say about anything «It might not work». I will cook dinner, it might burn. So what? I'm still cooking dinner, you know. I think it's a muscle you can also train instead of saying «it might not work» to say like «let's find out what happens». [00:13:10][42.2]

Steve: [00:13:15] We cannot know what we don't already know. And even like this, it is never safe to assume things will go one way because anything can happen. Claiming we know how things go is in a way blocking things to feel safe, to be courageous and experiment with new things, but even more to be able to support each other. There are many ways you can face challenges courageously. But, dears, don't feel put off by what's ahead. Because not every challenge is the same. You can have predictable challenges in which you can control outcomes, but you can also have complicated challenges where you don't always know what will happen. Sometimes the most complicated challenge is to simply have

fun. Courage is not a feeling, but it leads to lots of emotions. The safest environment, the best. To ensure that everybody - you included - in your team must now agree and commit to the purpose because you know: it's the purpose, my dears. Being the hero of our own life isn't only about going after an almighty goal, but to live our purpose in everything we do. If it serves the purpose, it cannot go wrong. And you can face anything. I heard once somewhere that life begins at the edge of your comfort zone. So what are you waiting for? Just do it. But step by step. [00:13:15][0.0]

[771.3]

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