

# Overcoming Apathy with the Power of Courage

***It takes courage to overcome apathy, courage that anyone can develop!***

By David Byrd

Courage comes in different packages, but the most important type of courage for a leader is emotional courage. Personal success will always be just beyond the grasp of those who do not develop the power of emotional courage because they will stay stuck in an apathetic comfort zone.

What is emotional courage? It is your personal, conditioned capacity to respond with positive actions rather than negative beliefs to all life events. It is a courage that:

- Picks you up when you fail
- Keeps you acting on your goals
- Brings stability and security
- Takes calculated risks
- Is the fuel for positive expectancy
- Dares to dream
- Is contagious
- Stands tall with optimism
- Faces its blind spot and says, "I can improve"
- Faces fear with an I-will-win attitude
- Never wastes time placing blame

The interesting thing about emotional courage is that there is no in-between position. You either have it or you do not. But the good news is you can develop emotional courage. In fact, the only way to get it is to develop it. We do not naturally possess this quality, but we can all choose to develop it.

To develop emotional courage, you must redirect your thinking and alter your attitude about yourself and your circumstances. I suggest following four steps to develop emotional courage:

**#1 — Believe in Your Potential:** You have the untapped potential to handle any circumstance or situation. You simply have to take positive action to develop that potential by building on your strengths. The alternative is to settle into the apathetic comfort zone of negative belief.

**#2 — Develop a Healthy Attitude Toward Mistakes, Failures, and Negative Outcomes:** It is common to make mistakes and fail, and there will always be negative circumstances over which you may not have any control. You cannot control all the circumstances of life, but you must control your responses to those circumstances. To develop emotional courage, you must start with a healthy attitude toward all life events, the good and the bad. Otherwise, you will get stuck in the apathetic comfort zone of fear and insecurity.

**#3 — Break Out of Your Negative Past Conditioning by Exercising Your Power of Choice:** Our past conditioning sometimes leads us in undesirable directions, but we can change that by exercising our power of choice. Thoughts lead to habits, and habits lead to behaviors. To develop emotional courage, you must break out of the apathetic comfort zone of your current conditioning by consciously choosing to act courageously.

**#4 — Redesign Your Attitudes by Displacement:** The fear of failure causes you to protect yourself by blaming or procrastinating. You think, "If it is never my fault, or if I never get started, I can never fail." This unproductive rationalization causes you to never try, which is obviously self-defeating. To develop emotional courage, you must displace the apathetic comfort zone of rationalization with fresh, positive thoughts of courage.

***You CAN overcome apathy with the power of courage!***

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David Byrd is president of Leadership Management, Inc. and is a master executive and trainer, with more than 28 years of experience working with top business executives and their organizations. To gain more of David's insights on overcoming apathy, order *The Tripping Point in Leadership — Overcoming Organizational Apathy* today, available at [www.thetrippingpointinleadership.com](http://www.thetrippingpointinleadership.com).

