

FOR WOMEN FOUNDERS

SHEcorporated Magazine

CHOOSING COURAGE

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THE CHOICE

COURAGE OVER COMFORT

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT THE MANY COURAGEOUS DECISIONS YOU'VE MADE AS AN ENTREPRENEUR?

I'm sure you know that starting and developing a business invites us to step out of our comfort zone (even when it seems the scariest) and into braving the path of courageous creativity — well, that's what I call the journey of entrepreneurship.

You might be familiar with the language, “courage over comfort,” by the incredibly thought-provoking work of Brene Brown. The powerful storyteller and leader in the work of vulnerability, shame, and courage has given us a profound blueprint of living an authentic life — with meaning and intention.

The humanistic and relevant themes of Brene's work have been instrumental for me on my journey with mental health challenges. Living in pursuit of perfection, and engaging in shame-covering over the years, had built a considerably solid armour that limited my movement into choosing courage.



Therapy has taught me so much about my courage. Courage is about showing up - despite fear and adversity. Think about how you show up in the many areas of your life, and the many roles you take on as women and entrepreneurs. Courage connects us to the heart of being, which then connects us to the art of creating — creating within our day-to-day lives, our work, and communities.

Here are some ideas on building a "courage over comfort" practice:

Embrace vulnerability:

If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it's that we are all vulnerable — people, businesses, systems, structures — all of us are susceptible to the fragility of life. We have repeatedly learned that we are not always in control. In this pandemic season, we are continuously exposed to constant states of fear and uncertainty, leaving our stress response centre overworked and exhausted.

Embracing vulnerability may be easier said than done. But, while it's associated with numerous challenging emotional states, it is a beautiful experience when we can lean in and embrace it — often leading to greater resiliency and authentic connection with others.

Explore your definition of vulnerability — how has it influenced your ability to make tough decisions, be open and honest with yourself and others, and establish healthy boundaries for yourself and your business?

Remember, vulnerability does NOT mean weakness — it means you are honouring what could be your greatest strength — and showing up in courage to be seen for who you are.

Name what you feel - and listen without attachment:

Embracing vulnerability requires us to be present in our mind, body, and spirit. It is a constant, daily evaluation of what we are feeling, how we are feeling it, and what we are doing with it. When we align with our emotions, we equip ourselves to make courageous decisions.

Just because we are courageous does not mean we do not experience difficult emotions like fear. Instead, when courage shows up against fear, acknowledge it, get curious about it, ask fear why it's there, and influence it to your advantage, but don't let it sit in the driver's seat. Suppressing hard emotions and fears may feel like self-preservation; however, it also delays the authentic rewards of positive experiences and outcomes in our lives.



Challenge your comfort, and leave the zone:

Oooh, this one may not always feel great in the moment, but you will be glad you left it. Expanding out of our comfort zone is about our mindset and practical small steps of action. Practice doing everyday tasks differently; look for opportunities to challenge yourself. What is one thing you can do today that scares you or challenges your comfort zone? When we practice leaving our comfort zone, we can increase our skillset, our self-confidence, and foster creativity and resiliency.

Celebrate courageous actions:

You made a hard decision; you allowed yourself to be vulnerable; you succeeded in the face of adversity — these are just some of the outcomes of being courageous.

What experiences can you add to your “Wall of Courageous Achievement”? Honour your courageous wins, because you are worthy of being celebrated!

There are no guarantees in life — but what we do have is far more valuable, and that’s courage!



MEET MARTINA KELADES, SOULPRENEUR & STORYTELLER

Martina Kelades is a professional speaker in mental health, a writer, and podcast host on the Life Out Loud Podcast.

She is the Founder of Life Out Loud — Mental Health Consulting & Creatives, a specialized business that utilizes a combination of platforms to expand conversations related to mental health and wellness in the workplace, and life in general.

In 2018, Martina went on medical leave from work, experiencing significant symptoms related to burnout, which ultimately ended her 10-year career as a Personal Development Counsellor and Facilitator. However, through her burnout, depression, and anxiety struggles, Martina decided to turn her pain into purpose — re-committing to living her life with intention. In addition to her work in mental health, Martina is a professional actor and model — inspired to use her talent and platforms to develop her art of storytelling, to advance and promote mental health within the entertainment industry.

