

The Courage to Show Up

Participant workbook • Purpose — The King

A companion to Brené Brown's edited talk on The Man in the Arena

Explore what it means to act on something that matters when success is uncertain and criticism is possible. Reflect on courage, making room for setbacks, and choosing feedback that helps you grow. Use these pages on your own or in a workshop.

Name _____ Date _____

Before you watch

What is something you would like to try, create, or contribute but have hesitated to begin?

Watch and notice

Listen for the three changes Brown describes after encountering Theodore Roosevelt's words about the person in the arena.

1. How does Brown connect vulnerability with showing up?

2. What risk does she say comes with being seen and creating?

3. What distinction does she make between constructive feedback and criticism she will not give weight to?

Name your arena

Brown describes wanting to create and be seen in her work and life. Her message invites us to consider where something matters enough to participate even when we cannot control the outcome.

Connect courage to purpose

My arena is a situation where I want to try, contribute, or be heard. For me, that situation is

Why does this matter to me? Who might benefit if I participate?

What am I afraid could happen? What is within my control, and what is outside it?

Make showing up specific

Showing up could mean sharing a draft, asking a question, applying for an opportunity, or starting a needed conversation. Choose an action that fits your situation and responsibilities.

What would showing up look like in my arena? Describe something I could actually do.

What support or preparation would help me take that step?

Make room to learn

Brown speaks directly about the defeats that can come with creating and being seen. For this exercise, consider how you could respond to a setback while staying connected to what matters to you.

Separate the result from the lesson

Recall an ordinary setback, or use an imagined example. What happened?

What did that result tell you about the approach, preparation, or circumstances? What did it leave unanswered?

What could you learn, repair, or change before another attempt?

Choose feedback that helps

Brown welcomes specific feedback that helps her improve. The questions below are a workbook practice for considering advice: What is specific and useful? What experience or understanding does this person bring? What can I check before deciding what to change?

Compare these responses to a presentation: “You’re terrible at this” and “I lost track of your main point; an example would help.” Which gives you something you can use, and why?

Who could offer informed, honest feedback about my next step? What specific question would I ask?

Practice note: Stay open to useful feedback from people affected by your actions, including people whose experience differs from your own.

Take one courageous step

Choose one manageable action for the next seven days. You do not need certainty about the outcome to prepare, seek support, and take a thoughtful step.

My plan

The action I will take and why it matters

When I will do it and what preparation or support I need

If I hesitate or meet a setback, how will I respond?

After I show up

What did I do, and what happened?

What feedback or evidence can help me learn? What will I keep or change?

What did this experience teach me about acting on my purpose?

Optional conversation: Share a step you are willing to take. Ask your partner what kind of support they want before offering advice.

Carry this question with you

What matters enough for me to show up before I know how it will turn out?

Video source: Brené Brown — The Man in the Arena Speech edited • [youtube.com/watch?v=-s6DQrqVHxM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-s6DQrqVHxM)
Brown discusses words from a speech by Theodore Roosevelt. Original reflection questions, activities, and practice guidance developed for Raising Royalty by I'm Third Enterprises, using the supplied transcript.